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RAM

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BOOMTOWN RAT HUNTING WITH BOB GELDOF

J.J. CALE RARE AND EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW

THE BEACH BOYS

THE ALIENS

GENESIS

PAUL McCARTNEY

MEO 245

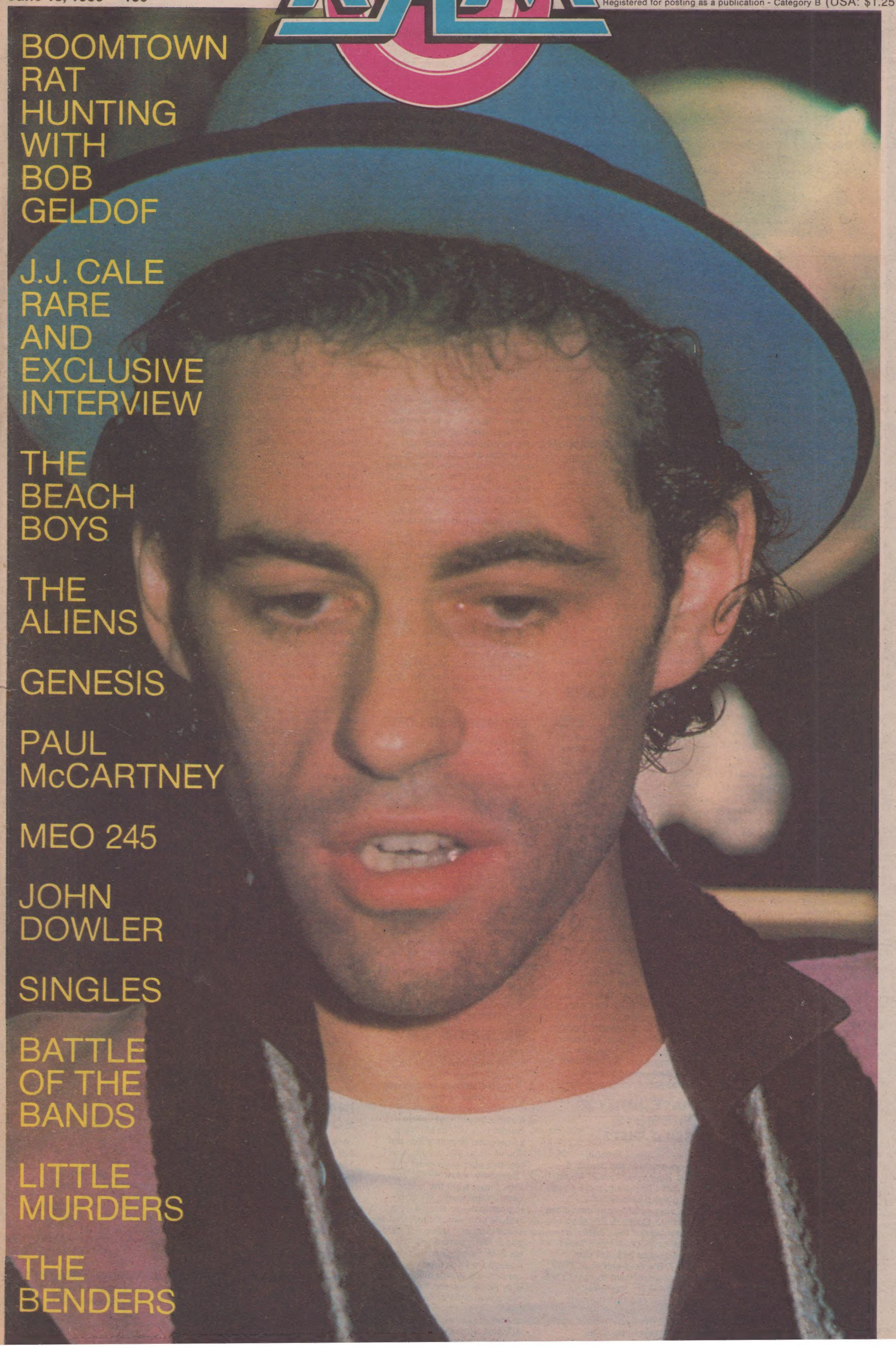
JOHN DOWLER

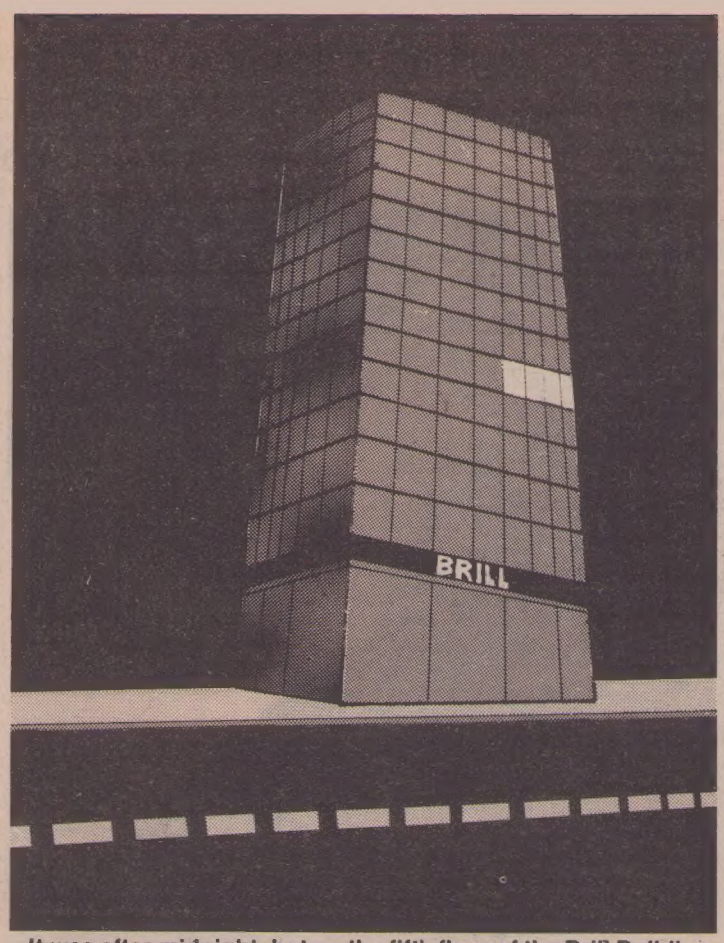
SINGLES

BATTLE OF THE BANDS

LITTLE MURDERS

THE BENDERS





It was after midnight, but on the fifth floor of the Brill Building lights still burned. Gerry Goffin sat in the hot stuffy little studio, slumped over the piano; his wife, Carole, paced dejectedly to and fro. "It just doesn't say anything, Gerry - 'Up In The Air'... what a crummy title. Let's have a look at these lyric sheets that the amateurs send in - maybe there's something fresh we could spark off."

R.I.P. ANDY DURANT

"There's a light across the river,
and it's making me dream.
It's the last of the riverboats,
and it's getting up steam.
I can see it through the willows,
I can hear it around the bend,
The birds fly up, and they're
saying,
'It won't be back again'."
(Last of the Riverboats
A. DURANT)

Andy Durant was not the best known musician in this country, but he was one of a handful who had a sentiment in his music - on top of that - he was one of the few gentlemen in the rock industry.
An old Stars' fan.

CLASH PRICE - OFFICIAL STATEMENT

I am solely responsible for the total confusion as to whether The Clash album in Australia at $11.99 is a lower price that £5 in the UK. The answer is that $11.99 is a lower price than £5. But before Brunswick goes scuttling back to the Commonwealth Trading Bank to demand $11.99 in exchange for the £5 he brought back from England, let me explain that the magic words "to CBS" were ommitted from the Page 6 article in RAM of April 4th.

The reason why CBS ends up with less out of $11.99 than it does out of £5 is simply because other "interested" parties, e.g. the tax man, etc. get a bigger piece of the pie here than they do in the U.K.

Topper was upset because he wanted The Clash *London Calling* double album to cost the same as a single album. Well a CBS single album retails here for $8.99 which at an exchange rate of 49.94 equals £4.49 i.e. 51 pence less than the £5 U.K. price for *London Calling*. So maybe the price is wrong in England - gets complicated doesn't it? No wonder my grasp of fiscal affairs is so hopeless.
Comparing retail record prices, in isolation, between the U.K. and Australia is like comparing house prices in Earls Court with Balmain, it really doesn't tell you anything except they're different. As a vociferous opponent to escalating record prices without thought or consideration to quality, it calms me somewhat that a Sydney secretary who earns an average 30% more than her London counterpart can, at today's exchange rate, buy a full price single album at the Australian $ equivalent of 50 pence less than she could in London.

Anybody who understands all this, should, without hesitation, write to CBS for a job.
Paul Russell,
Managing Director, CBS.

We appreciate the margins you operate on, Paul. In their own dumb way, however, our readers still seem to reckon 'Two-for-the-price-of-one' means the same thing in Earls Court or Balmain: and that's the bargain the Clash wanted us to get. Perhaps, like all bargain-hunters, they're just stingy.

SKYHOOKS FANS FIGHT BACK

Didn't I make a prick of myself, I raved on for months how Skyhooks were pretty fucked and were dead after Shirl left! OK, let's make this official. I, Karen, apologize to Linda Sneddon. You were right, I was wrong. Skyhooks are G.R.E.A.T., especially with that fucking HOT album, and I'm even going to see them live.

I thought a lot of the I LOVE TONY WILLIAMS and SKYHOOKS letters were shit. Wrong again! I can see what people mean - that the whole band are so rootable, especially Tony, Bongo, Bob, Greg and Fred. OK guys, let's have a sevensome! You's, me and your bloody magnificent album! If this album doesn't hit the Number One spot, Australians need bombing!
Reformed Rock fan, Karen,
The New Hooker, Victoria.

We're receiving bulk pro-Hooks mail at present: perhaps the dubious critical reception of 'Hot For The Orient' is inspiring grassroots reaction, especially among young ladies.

HAVE JIMMY & THE BOYS SOLD OUT?

Ignatius Jones faithfully promised that the Jimmy & The Boys resurrection would be more shocking, more sleazy than the previous act.

Having recently witnessed the Comb & Cutter & Brighton Hotel legs of the "Rude To You" tour, I can say without fear of contradiction that J & T B's have sold-out. They have toned-down the act to the extent where the offal-throwing and doll-burning routines no longer exist. Iggy doesn't even cut himself up!

I was expecting to be shocked - instead, the gig had all the shock and outrage of a Pat Boone concert.

Disillusioned as I am with Iggy & The Boys I would like to offer the following suggestions:
• Retain the old shock-rock routines that established the cult following of J & T B's.
• Find a sax player quickly, as Joylene's attempt at covering the brass section with synthesiser has been a dismal failure.

Dee Minor's comment that his act would show J & T B's to be stage memories seems to be more and more factual.
Steve Campbell,
Wentworthville.

H.M. - ENDLESS RUMBLES

Well, you tried your best didn't you? You tried to bury Heavy Metal under endless empty witticisms, false criticisms and gross hypocrisy. With your poisoned minds and pointed words you tried to destroy something that would not die. Like busy little termites, cowards with no identity, you gnawed away at Heavy Metal but the foundations were far too strong. Like mindless vandals you attempted to destroy something that so many people love. Why?

Here's some news from Britain for all you brain-washed bandwaggon bastards. Heavy Metal has emerged from all the crap with a vengeance. The kids are flocking to see the new breed of exciting, energetic and entertaining Heavy Metal bands. Bands like Judas Priest, Iron Maiden, Def Leppard and Saxon are not tired and jaded, nor are they boring old farts. The Charts have been taken by storm so once again Heavy Metal is filling the airwaves. The British Press are powerless to stop them so what are you little fashion trendies going to do? Cover your ears, close your eyes and pretend it doesn't exist?

It's up to you! HEAVY METAL IS ALIVE AND IT THRIVES!
Philip Crouch,
Faithful to the end.

Actually, we've got a H.M. roundup coming shortly - be patient, Ye Mighty Headbangers!

GO HOME GELDOF

Bob Geldof is an arrogant Paddy asshole and the *Countdown* show he did (May 11) must have left a lot of viewers feeling likewise, i.e. his usual wanky presentation, dumb bitchy wisecracks, his obvious conceit. But, what has prompted my outburst was the way he defied the musical integrity of the "little people from down under" who put *I Got You* at No.1 for 6 weeks, so far, by being so blatant about his dislike for our ENZ. I love them. They are a band of real musicians, which probably and unconsciously gives B.G. the shits. Musically the ENZ leave the Boring Rodents flat.
Liz Clitz
P.S. Just got back from USA & nobody there likes B.R.'s either!

GRIPES & REQUESTS

I've got two things to whinge about. First, there were no Chartz in Issue 134.

I know that there might have been a postal strike, or the Chartz were accidentally lost/destroyed just before printing, or you might have some good excuse even, but, you've done this before, and I feel this slackness must stop.

Secondly, a few weeks ago, Pink Floyd were the hottest band in the world. It's only logical that you should do a feature on them. I know that in some long ago issue you said about them something like "As for Pink Floyd, Greta Garbo does more interviews". I don't care. If you want an interview with Roger Waters, just send him a reasonable about of cannabis, or you could do a review of their concerts in America, (just copy it word for word out of "J---" magazine like you did with the B-52s story). But best of all, tell us about the band. I've got six of their albums but I know little about the history of the band, and the band members.
Yours unsincerely,
A reader.

Chartz got squeezed out by a couple of articles running longer than planned. Michael Porteus submitted the B-52s to both mags... we goofed. We'll look for a Floyd story, but what's a reasonable amount of cannabis?

ARE PUNKS WORKING CLASS?

How long will you and others, especially the corporate media, persist in erroneously labelling as 'punk' every band born in a garage and weaned on ineptitude? Punk. Never a movement but a grass-roots reaction to corrupt culture, planted in working-class rebellion, but cynically nurtured by recording companies concerned with end of year financial statements.

The press must distinguish between working-class bands, i.e. those who are, and play for, the working classes; and middle-class bands, i.e. those who aim to make a profit *any* way they can. Labelling the Jam, the Clash, the Damned and the Ramones as 'punk' is misleading and insulting to true punk bands.

The Jam are middle-class mods with a Pete Townshend fixation and a penchant for spewing meaningless 'Art School' rhetoric. The Clash are assembly-line, ready-made urban nihilists seeking profits left, right and middle of the road e.g. pop and reggae efforts on 'London Calling'. Even more reactionary are the Damned, a laughable collection of ex-hippies and Jagger-Richard musical rejects in 2-chord form. 'White dopes on punk' to quote experts. You can even see the scars where the band-wagon ran over them in full-flight. As for the idiotic Ramones, they resemble Aerosmith without the drag, speeded up and strained. Real Franken-(Seymour)-Steins.

The bottom line is that these bands are USED as a product in a consumer, capitalist society. More importantly, they want to be! They have *no* objectives beyond making a profit. The media aids in perpetuating the hype-explosion began three years ago. Take Blondie. They began as punk, moved on to Power Pop, then Disco and now M.O.R. Exploring new directions, huh? Sure, new directions to the bank.

What's wrong with making money, you say? Nothing, if you don't drown it in contrived, bullshit hype, designed to dupe working class kids. The middle-class punters suck it up as trendy. They can afford it. 'Punk' musicians, among other things, are committed to their music first and foremost and at least try to raise consciousness and get a message across. BE OBJECTIVE, not consumers!
Brian Cahill.

Unfortunately, class consciousness doesn't guarantee musical talent, but perhaps you could suggest some interesting Australian 'working class' bands with 'correct' ideologies.

IN PRAISE OF BOOTLEGS

Let's give three cheers to all our big record companies! They've finally succeeded in getting a major bootlegging operation busted. The bootleggers had been supplying an obvious and large demand for several years; a demand that wasn't met by the MAJOR companies!

One of the reasons people buy bootlegs is to hear a particular band playing live to a large, responsive audience. MAJOR record companies are reluctant to release - or force the band to release - live albums. The bands are at fault in cases because they invariably feel that it's not the right time to release live material. The amount of Bootleg albums being manufactured and sold quickly dispels this theory so by holding back live albums, the record companies and the bands aren't properly catering for the people who support them by way of buying millions of records, posters, etc, etc...

While company executives and bands worry about losing profits and royalties, the bootlegger thrives by satisfying the people being ignored by all concerned.

Some bootlegs are of higher quality than many 'authorised' recordings whilst most are comparable. A live album should be representative of a band's independent potential. How many 'authorised' live albums are touched up in the studios before hitting the record bars? Lost count? On most bootlegs, you'll hear it as it's played with the accompanying sound problems, on-stage banter and so on. At $7 for a single album, a good quality bootleg is great value in these days of $9 (soon to rise) albums.

Since the bootleg album fills the demand that the record companies have ignored, the companies and artists have no right to demand any compensation from the bootleggers. Supply must meet demand!

The 'real' crims are the people who manufacture 'pirate' tapes for public sale. This blatant and unashamed activity is the main worry for the COMPANIES, not the bootleggers. The companies $9 albums can be bought at many outlets in the guise of $4 cassettes. Such cassettes appeal to the younger kids who haven't got as much money to spend and who aren't as worried about the inferior quality as their older (wealthier?) more discerning counterparts.
Yours etceterally,
Robert McKenzie,
Warrnambool.

1st objection bands have to bootlegs is that they don't get paid for them. The second, that the art of making records is quite different from that of playing live. Do you really think bands should be 'forced' to release albums, and if they don't, to have someone make enormous profits out of their creativity?

NO LIGHTS, NO SHOW

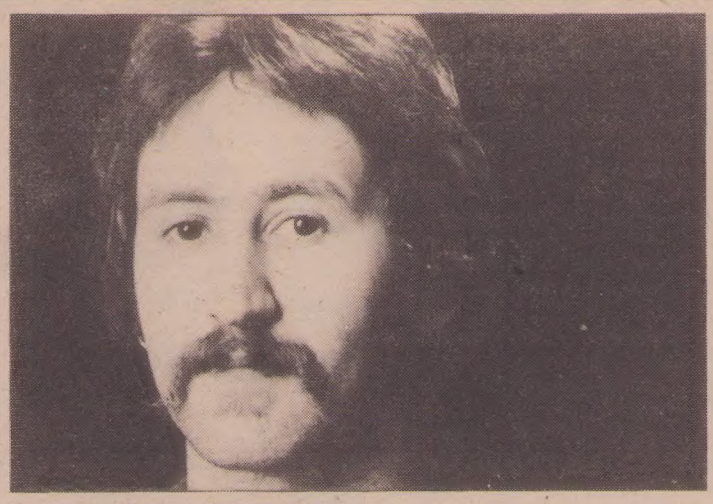
Midnight Oil's non-appearance at the Bangalow Bowling Club in northern NSW recently was a total piss off for the biggest crowd ever to turn up at the place. Hundreds of punters came out of the hills for this one. Anyhow it seems their fucking light show wouldn't operate on the power available and so the pricks wouldn't play. We all came to listen to some good rock'n'roll, not watch some clever support light show. You guys lost a lot of supporters that night.
Serves you right you bunch of prima donna arseholes.
'Dried Head'.

Understand your feelings... Most major bands have learnt from bitter experience that power facilities in many venues (particularly clubs that were wired before r'n'r was dreamed of) are totally inadequate. Contracts with these venues specify that 3 phase power must be available. Obviously, someone, either at the venue, or the agency, or the band's management didn't check the clauses.

"How the hell could you write a song round that lot, let alone find a sure fire title?" - Goffin threw the scrawled sheets to the floor in disgust. "C'mon honey, let's go and cool off up on the roof."

P.O BOX 746, DARLINGHURST. NSW 2010.

DIRT



R.I.P. ANDY DURANT - STARS' SONGWRITER DIES OF CANCER.

"What do I remember about him most of all? His gentleness, his friendliness, his smiling eyes... he never had a bad word to say about anyone. He never gave up through all the hard times. He was a real Australian in that he loved this country's original pioneering spirit." **- Michael Chugg, Stars' manager.**

Andy Durant, songwriter/singer and guitarist for **Stars,** who broke up last November, died of cancer on Tuesday May 6. He was 25. The cancer was generated by a *melanoma,* a blueish, blackish mole on his back. Many people have melanomas and many melanomas are not malignant. Even those that are, are not dramatically obvious. The usual signs are; the mole changes slightly in size, and colour, and becomes affected with a persistent itch.

Andy Durant had the cancer removed late last year and, for a while, it was presumed the growth had been checked before malignancy spread. Unfortunately, not so.

"About February," says **Malcolm Eastick,** Andy's guitar partner in Stars, "the downhill slide started to accelerate. It's incredible to think that eight months ago he was bounding around a stage and now he's dead. As far as justice goes in the world, it shows there isn't any."

But Eastick's main emotion about Andy's death is not bitterness. Rather, he sees Durant's last months as a time of love, compassion and productivity. During his last months, Eastick sat by Andy's bedside and the two worked on a collection of songs together.

"His wish was that no one would know he had cancer, except a small number of friends... you could count them on the fingers of one hand," says Eastick. "I was the only musician he told, and his main desire in those last months was to keep writing songs. It was the last thing in his life and, in the end, the only thing. To him it meant everything and working with him over those last months was the biggest thing so far, in my life.

"It's now only a short time after his death and it's painful to talk about it. But there are practical things to do as well, and the first of them is to ensure his music is remembered.

"Andy always regarded himself more as a songwriter than a player, although he had a very good voice and a highly individualistic guitar style. But he was modest about his playing, if it came to a choice between playing in a band and writing songs, he would have left the band every time.

"He was not so much a leader or a decision-maker, but he was one hell of an observer. His songs were about people he knew or people he'd met briefly along the way, who'd made some kind of impression on him.

"In real life, he was soft spoken and he'd say nothing, rather than speak badly of anyone. If he had criticisms of anyone, he'd work them out carefully and put them in his songs."

What will happen to the batch of songs (rumoured to be more than sufficient for an album) written by Andy Durant and Eastick in those last few months, is so far undetermined. But, at least a handful of them will emerge when a collection of Andy's musician friends get together for memorial concerts in Sydney and Melbourne. The concerts are tipped for June, although no dates have yet been set.

Andy Durant's songs will also feature on a forthcoming Stars live album.

"To Andy," says Malcolm Eastick, "songwriting meant everything. And I really do believe he would have developed into one of Australia's greatest."

Stars themselves were often tipped as Australia's next **Little River Band** - a tribute to the overseas potential of their melodic, yet rock-strong repertoire. They broke up with several overseas record companies strongly interested, but with negotiations uncompleted.

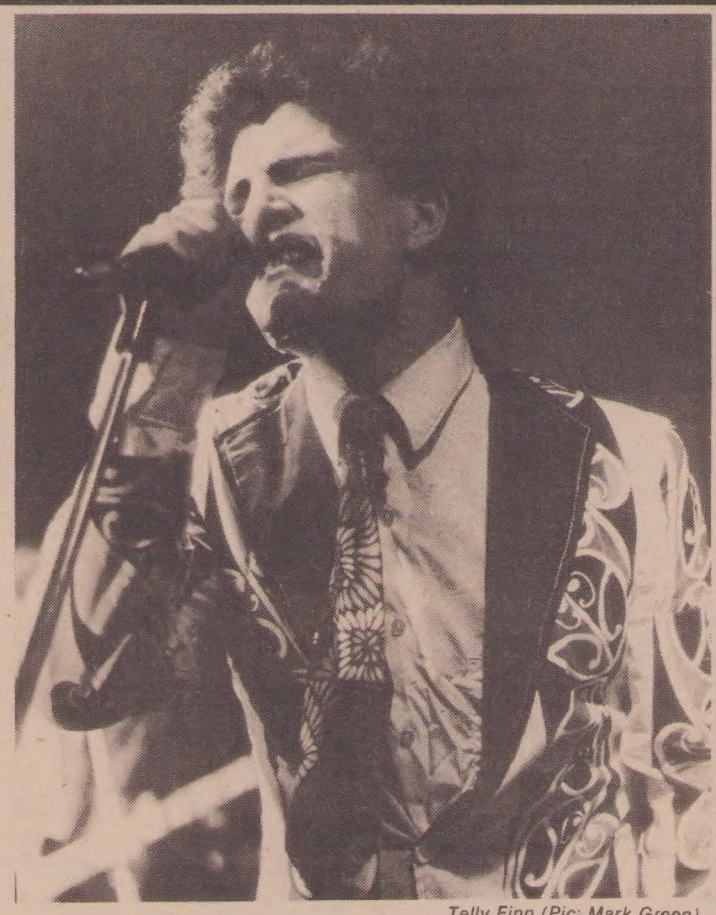
Andy Durant died having completed a strong catalogue of songs on the two Stars' albums *Paradise* and *Land Of Fortune.* Several of his best known titles were *Back Again, West Is The Way, Mighty Rock, Look After Yourself, Last Of The Riverboats, Innocent Bystander* and *Redneck Boogie*.

He could have gone on to write as good and better, and Stars themselves could have gone on to become one of Australia's most illustrious musical exports - had the lucky breaks come their way.

There are two ways of looking at it - with the trace of bitterness expressed by Malcolm Eastick when he says *"As far as justice goes in the world, it just shows there isn't any."* Or, as Eastick also says, *"It's painful... but there are practical things to do and the first of them is to ensure his music is remembered."*

Andy Durant lived and died, not in bitterness but, determined to be remembered for the thing he loved best - writing songs.

Anthony O'Grady



Telly Finn (Pic: Mark Green)

ENZ MAKE FIRST OZ HOME VIDEO

Looks like **Split Enz** are going to be the first Oz-based band to make it onto video cassette. Mushroom Records are spreading their fungus into the area of audio visuals, with a new company called Video LP and the Enz have been chosen to be their first video disc stars. The package will be called *Split Enz True Colours* and will feature a number of tracks from the album as well as some *Nightmoves* concert footage. The cassette will be available on VHS, Phillips and Beta, and will retail for the meagre sum of $59.50. Sure makes albums and concert tickets seem cheap.

Meanwhile, **Gary Numan** has just released a video cassette in London, featuring mucho technobafflement and video trickery. **Blondie's** *Eat To The Beat* visual treat is still being held up for domestic release by royalty squabbles. But it was shown on Oz network TV last week. Meanwhile, a rock'n'roll video melodrama, by **Marty Balin** (ex-**Jefferson Starship**), should be out sometime over the next month or so.

Matt Finish Now. (Pic: Peter Dawson)

Strikingly popular Sydney band **Matt Finish** are at last back on the road again, after six weeks off due to various illnesses and line up changes. First big decision for them is to sort out a recording contract from the more than several offers they're reputed to have received.

Sore Iva

Wilting **Flowers** currently off the road as lead petal **Iva Davies** has come down with a sickness. There goes live promotion for the group's new single *I Can't Help Myself.*

Stevie Nicks - Dumbo Freak (D. Hill/

Fleetwood Mac's caped wonder, **Stevie** (I'm just a little girl at heart) **Nicks,** had to be forcibly removed from a New York theatre earlier this year. *The Wizard of Oz* and *Dumbo* were on a double bill and after seventeen consecutive screenings, she still hadn't seen enough. "I've seen Wicked Witches. I've seen cute little dogs and young girls from Kansas," she told the policeman as he showed her to the door, "but I've never seen an elephant that could fly."

Nick Cave - Old Boy Next Door (Pic: Ron McPherson)

Oz band, **The Boys Next Door,** now in London, have changed their name to **The Birthday Party** and are about to release a single called, *Mr Clarinet/Happy Birthday.*

Graham Parker (Karen O'Connor)

Bruce Springsteen shows his appreciation of another fine voice, by appearing as backing vocalist on **Graham Parker's** upcoming elpee, *The Up Escalator.* Parker has now severed ties with the Mercury label, except in Australia. For the rest of the world he'll appear on the Stiff label, which just happens to be owned by his manager **Dave Robinson,** in the USA, England and The Continent.

On the track of the ever-changing **Split Enz** *True Colours* cover... After supplies of the gold and silver one run out, another three different colour combinations will be printed, making a total of *eight* different covers, including the black and white special that went out to the media...

In South Australia, a state Labor MP will present a petition to parliament, on behalf of the Musicians' Union, early next month, calling for government protection of performing musicians from record-playing discos. Who said politicians don't have hearts?

Old Horses aren't put down easily. **Ross Ryan,** of *Pegasus* fame, is making a come-back. His new single, *Harlow & Chaplin,* is in the shops now, his rock'n'roll band is ready to hit the pubs and another album has reached planning stages. He's toughened up his act, burned his acoustic guitar and wants, he says, "to have fun."

SPACE
RACE

MI-SEX

"Are you a Clone?"
"No, I'm in the Space Race."

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DIRT

"Sorry Joe - I'm fed up to here with touring!" (Pic: Gary Merrin)

November this year marks the centenary of the death of **Ned Kelly** and mammoth celebrations are already getting underway. Among them, rumour has it, are plans to bring elderly rock star, **Mick Jagger,** out here to join the party.

Quote of the week from **Bee Gee, Barry** (the hairy one) **Gibb...** "I hate disco. I listen to it now and all I hear is a cymbal and a backbeat. I don't think we want to do it again." Is it too late to save contemporary music?

Has rock'n'roll become respectable? When federal arbitration commissioners start writing rock songs, it could be time to worry. Two of the songs on **Australian Crawl**'s *The Boys Light Up* album were co-written by band member, **Brad Robinson,** and his father, **Mr Justice James Robinson.**

Elvis Costello, who was going to tour Oz later this year, has announced he's giving up touring altogether, which means no go for **Jo Jo,** who were going to support the show.

Freddie Strauks, of **Skyhooks,** may soon join fellow Melbourne band, **Sports.** But the word is, he won't desert the ship until interest in their current album declines. Also, **Bongo Starr** is a tip to be a member of **Jimmy & The Boys** before the year runs out.

Ita Buttrose is in search of a record contract. The nature of the material she intends immortalising on vinyl is top secret but folk guitarist, **Al Ward,** has suggested *Thinging in the Shower* would make an excellent *firtht thingle.* Ita is about to be immortalised on vinyl soon anyway. She stars in a **Don Walker** song off the new **Cold Chisel** album, *East.*

Bruce Springsteen's most famous single, *Born To Run,* may soon be the official state song for New Jersey, USA. An assemblyman has announced plans to introduce a bill in the state legislature for it to happen.

Both **Cher** and **Carly Simon** have new albums in the works and both are reported to be sneaking one or two "new wave" tracks onto them. The mind boggles.

LRB's **David Briggs** has been producing circular vinyl objects for new wave band, **MEO 245.** And if you find the musical contrast there surprising, you may be interested to know that the same Mr Briggs was once musical director for Australia's most berserk export, **Geoff Duff.**

Yet another illustration of the taste of Australian audiences. Would you believe that the **Osmonds** were outselling the **Boomtown Rats** in daily ticket sales by seven to one?

The **Sports** are off the road for a while writing material for their upcoming fourth LP, which should get underway as soon as they decide on a producer. **David Tickle,** the man behind **Split Enz** vinyl produce, was a favourite until **Martin Armiger** commented that he wasn't at all impressed with David's habit of sitting down for a smoko at four o'clock in the afternoon and theorising on the ills of the world into the early hours.

To tour next month are an interesting trio: The pre-fab **B-52s,** the pre-Beatles **Del Shannon** and the pre-wrecked **Wreckless Eric.**

The Bushwackers' latest gem of Australiana has just been released. The album and accompanying printed matter are aptly titled *The Bushwackers' Dance Album* and *The Bushwackers' Dance Book.*

international tourists

Janis Ian
June
24 Brisbane Festival Hall
26 Sydney Regent Theatre
30 Melbourne Dallas Brooks
July
3 Perth Concert Hall
6 Adelaide Festival Hall

Village People
June
2 Festival Hall, Melbourne
3 Festival Hall, Melbourne

The Osmonds
June
2 Melbourne Palais Theatre
6,7 Sydney Capitol Theatre

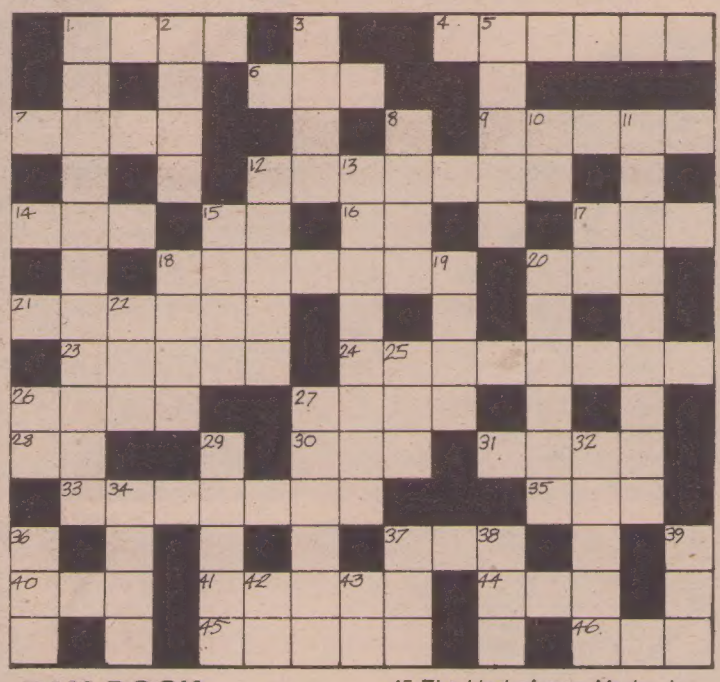
B-52's
June
19 Capitol Theatre Sydney
21 Brisbane Festival Hall
24 Canberra Showground Pav.
25 Melbourne Festival Hall
27 Adelaide Apollo Stadium
29 Perth Concert Hall

Wreckless Eric
June
11 Civic Hotel
12 Sylvania Hotel
13 Selinas
14 Family Hotel
15 South Sydney Jnrs
16 Sundowner Hotel
18 Ambassador Newcastle
19 Park Beach Motel, Coffs Harb
20 Cloudland (with Split Enz)
July
1-13 Canberra, Adelaide, WA

Taj Mahal
June
4 Capitol Theatre, Sydney
6,7 The Arkaba, Adelaide
10 Perth Concert Hall
12 Dallas Brookes Hall, Melb
17 ANU, Canberra

Rory Gallagher
June
18 Perth Concert Hall
21 Capitol Theatre, Sydney
23 Adelaide Festival Theatre
24 Melbourne Palais Theatre
27 Brisbane Cloudland

Ralph McTell
June
17 Ballarat Memorial Theatre
18 Kuringai CAE
19 Sydney Town Hall
20 Newcastle, Griffith Duncan Theatre
21 Canberra ANU
22 Wagga Riverina CAE
25 Armidale
26 Adelaide Town Hall
27 Melbourne Dallas Brookes



RAM ROCK X-WORD No. 3

ACROSS

1 Any higher and only dogs will hear her.
4 Blues guitarist, not unlike Freddy or Albert.
6 Germany had the middle of the Knack backwards.
7 Stevie Wright single, parts 1 & 2.
9 A group no longer super.
12. Police paean to prostitution.
14 Musician and T. Heads producer.
15 US city put tequila to music.
16 Who played slide on Beefhearts 1st two?
17 J. Lydon's group.
18 Most popular Jackson bro.
20. Defunct Welsh homo sapiens.
21 Rhyming Rita Jean.
23 Burnette or the boxer.
24 Banshees singer.
26 New York furry band.
27 2nd name of trad. UK folk band.
28 (See 30 across).
30 Godley & Creme were once members.
31 Charlie Fox's 'Mockingbird' partner.
33 A third of Labelle.
35 (See 44 across).
37 Iran has nothing to do with these na na's.
40 Slits LP.
41 Judy was one, according to the Ramones?
44 Just a normal Jackson.
45 The kind of man Marley is.
46 Jagger's bushranger film role.

DOWN

1 Played with the La De Da's.
2 Early Van Morrison group.
3 Wilko replacement.
5 Abba member.
8 Recorded early classic version of 'I Heard It Through the Grapevine'.
10 Initials of Atlantic Record Co. big boss.
11 Led by dark macho Irishman.
12 A fast group with chart success.
13 Poly Styrene was their focal point.
15 Mr Wray has connections with the birth of rock'n'roll.
17 A short public address system.
18 Strolling Bones mouthpiece.
19 Almost shared spotlight with Joe on Mad dogs tour.
20 Disco Nightingale.
22 An Everly brother.
25 Alias 'Molly'.
26 Brief Master of Ceremony.
27 Defunct group featuring Peter Cupples.
29 1 of the 2 whitest Texans.
32 Girl with Meatloaf connections.
34 ---- James. Female soul singer of long standing.
36 Legehdary hard rockers from Motor City, Detroit.
37 Mod version of reggae.
38 Steely Dan LP.
39 1st to exit from Skyhooks.
42 Same as 17 down.
43 Part of Aust. with the biggest rock, but very little roll.

STUDIOS 301
301 CASTLEREAGH STREET,
SYDNEY, N.S.W., AUSTRALIA, 2000
TELEPHONE: 20912. TELEX: "EMIREC" 24182

ANSWERS TO X-WORD NO. 2

ACROSS

1. Shirley (Strachan)
6. reaper
8. Void (oids)
9. (Johnny) O'Keefe
10. Qld
12. CCR (Creedence Clearwater Revival)
14. (The) end
16. Funk
18. bass
19. The Knack
23. disco
26. Chicago
28. Ariel
29. (John) Denver
30. Gloria
33. Ry Cooder
36. E
37. Cat (Stevens)
39. Weather (Report)
42. Ho
43. (Normie) Rowe
45. Animal
46. (Jim) Capaldi
47. Rev.
49. Elliot
50. Rory (Gallagher)
52. (Renee) Geyer

DOWN

1. Sports
2. Ives
3. Roe
4. Life
5. Eden
6. (Keith) Relf
7. Pink (Floyd)
11. Duck
12. Chance
13. Ross (Wilson)
15. Danno
17. Chicago
20. Corea
21. Fire
22. Oh (Well)
23. Dave (Warner)
24. Sire
25. old
26. Cher
27. Goode
29. Dirt (Band)
31. Lowell (George)
32. Reading
34. Cooper
35. Lene
36. E (Street band)
37. Col
38. TRB (Tom Robinson Band)
40. Harry
41. (Little) River (Band)
42. (Daryl) Hall
43. Ra
44. WA
46. CCR
48. Ron (Wood)

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TAJ MAHAL

"They cuss on us and spit on us ...yet they luurve our music."

God, he's sexy!" whispered the girl. I had to admit that the big black feller up on stage with the guitar and extraordinary straw hat was pretty handsome - and he didn't need any tight rock-star trousers to start some heavy breathing beside me. Nor did he need anything else than that electric guitar and that rich voice to fill the theatre. From blues to reggae and the many black idioms in between; you could feel people itching to dance, and longed to be in a club. That was Sydney, October 78.

Articles about Taj Mahal often call him a 'musicologist', referring to his devotion to diverse ethnic musics. For at least half of his fifteen year recording career he was labelled as a blues artist, a pigeon hole that rarely gets much of a major record company's support. But enough people bought the albums for him to make ten between '67 and '76. With the last of these, *Satisfied'n'Tickled Too,* Taj was branching out in too many directions for the record company. He moved from CBS to another major, Warner Bros: after another three albums, the same problem of understanding developed. Taj was getting too 'experimental' to be marketed as folk or blues, nor could he be promoted in the straight rock area.

He decided to switch to a small independent, Crystal Clear Records, and just contract album-by-album, trusting that his staunch fans round the world would search a bit harder and overcome any distribution problems. It seems there are enough of them in Australia to try another tour, and this time to bring his regular group, the International Rhythm Band, most of whom have played on his albums over the last few years. In a pre-tour phone chat, Taj spoke of keeping his fingers crossed about the Oz sound crew. An integral part of the band's sound are the steel drums of Robert Greenidge, and since this fabulous instrument has only been in existence for about thirty years and, until recently, rarely found outside the Carribean, few people down under will have had any experience in mixing them.

"God, I'll be in *tears* if it doesn't go right; or else I'll be a raving madman... but the credibility of your technical people down there is really good - believe me, that last tour was the best one that I've ever been on in the world. I mean the people up here, *(in the good ol' USA)*, I hate to put them down, but some of them are such turkeys."

Do you see the Australian music scene as fairly similar to the States?

"It's similar to America a few years back. It's like it's in the Eighties but the enthusiasm is more like the Fifties."

According to Mi-Sex and other recent visitors, it's just the reverse, with American mainstream taste being several years behind Oz: but no matter, Taj reckons we're very healthy and open.

We talk about how his own taste was formed. Unlike the older generation of bluesmen, learning the blues in the ghettos of Chicago and the South, Taj, who was born in 1942, grew up in Massachusetts, the son of a jazz musician and composer. (The family name is Fredericks - Taj Mahal is a nom de stage.)

"Jazz... West Indian music *(the family originally came from the Dutch Antilles)*, a little bit of African music, Latin, and black American gospel. And classical music also. When I first heard blues, it was from people like Count Basie, or Louis Jordan, Eddie 'Cleanhead' Vincent... y'know, more the sophisticated, cabaret style."

By the time he was getting into the "dirty, gut-bucket Muddy Waters stuff," so were the whites, who turned it into rock'n'roll.

"I just heard something, like, *You Ain't Nothing But A Hound Dog*, with Big Momma Thorton, then along came Elvis Presley and covered it.

"My perspective on it was 'God! How come they're always rippin' off the black people? They don't like us, they stick us down in these funky ghettos, and they cuss us and curse us, and spit on us and stomp on us, and miscengenate our line... yet they *luuurve* our music, got to have that music... and they want that mammy to nurse their kids and all that'... I say 'Wait a minute, you people' *(laughter whistling and popping down the phone line)* - you seriously need to go and see Sigmund Freud, stop for a moment and get your brains cleaned out."

"So I decided, as a black artist, I was going to study what made the black artist so vulnerable: I mean, it just amazed me - how could he put out such good energy, and mean so much spiritually... and be so ripped off. So what I'm primarily trying to get together, is to be a successful black musician, but also to be a historian, and a musicologist, and also play the music live.

"Last year, man, we were in Africa for fifty two dates, and that was exciting 'cause I got to tie up all the loose ends in my head with the instruments and sounds. I found my people; I found my name."

It's been a long road - and initially Taj wasn't even sure about being a professional musician. But after graduating from uni with a degree in Animal Husbandry, he moved to California, and eventually, (in '66), formed a band with Ry Cooder and Jesse Davis called the Rising Sons. They all went on to have fairly notable careers, though gaining a lot more respect than record sales. Taj has always been scrupulous about sharing that respect when he performs other people's material, even when he's substantially re-written it, and more important, making sure they get a full share of the royalties. "That's why I liked covering some of the blues tunes, so's some of the older cats get a chance at a few thousand dollars."

While many will be glad to hear Taj is still doing old favourites like *Corrina, Freight Train, Fishin' Blues* and *Nobody's Business But My Own*, the presence of the band may enable him to stretch out with some of the more intricate material from the later albums. This doesn't mean 'obscure', but rather the blending of the whole band's experience of black music - "We play experimental, progressive Afro-sounds", says Taj, covering all bases.

Even though he's no longer with a major company, Taj is confident that somehow his new record, *Direct And Live*, is going to do alright. "I mean, we know there's got to be a million people in the *world* who want to hear us." I say I'm looking forward to it myself: Taj says goodbye with some amazing gibberish that he swears is an Australian accent.

"I love the way you people talk: it's like psychaedelic Cockney."

Greg Taylor

John Campbell demonstrates the Long Hairy Finger (Pic: Mark Green)

WENDING 'ROUND THE BENDERS

First there's the lead guitar. Planes of sound textured like fine sandpaper provide a drone-like base to the Benders' opening number, *Plain Tense.* It's a peculiarly disinterested effect, and peculiarly arresting. The night holds promise; if, as the band maintain, *Plain Tense* is representative of their planned direction, the future equally holds promise.

The past should have provided them with a solid grounding. Songwriter and guitarist Greg Thomas, lead guitarist Les Barker and bassist Nevio Aresca were all members of a band called Lois Lane, whose three rather questionable claims to fame were winning the 1977 3XY Battle of the Bands, being reviewed in RAM as a "glorified Carlton cabaret band", and of course, spawning the Benders. The first proved to mean precisely nothing in practical terms; as for the second, the Benders reject all three adjectives and describe the current act as simply "a good rock'n'roll band". They also point out that the Carlton/Fitzroy area is not exactly a bastion of Bender support, to understate the case.

By January 1979 Lois Lane had gone about as far as they could go and found it was nowhere. Besides, *Superman - the Movie* had just come out and the name didn't seem quite as cute anymore. The remedy: a change of name, of singer, and of image. Inspired by the treacherous wendings of the Fern Tree Gully roads the band chose the Hair-pin Benders, which was shortened to the Benders for convenience and "other connotations."

A red-headed strutter named John Campbell was brought in as lead singer. Johnno's own musical background was as a bass player with jazz fusion leanings, but he has an aggressive stage presence that makes him an excellent frontman. The voice - well, the voice is strong and it definitely has character. It's not quite sure WHOSE yet, but there's character in there. He projects an improbable mixture of vocal identities often suggesting an R&B singer with New Wave inflections. On *Macho Mick* the combination is startlingly evocative of a cement mixer with hiccups.

Predictably, the Benders are trying to avoid being categorised but it comes as a surprise to hear John claim to have been indifferent to punk and only marginally influenced by R&B. The inclusion of a Dr Feelgood cover is a high point in the set. The Benders are consciously disassociating themselves from the macho rock'n'roll image and point to the new songs *Plain Tense, Five Go Off On Holiday* and *Long Hairy Fingers* as the way of the future.

With the screening of *Long Hairy Fingers* the Benders became the first completely independent band to have their own filmclip on Nightmoves. The clip was made for about $650 as part of the promotion for the Benders' EP *Picnic At Oakleigh Rotunda.* Recorded in seven hours and mixed in sixteen, the EP was the result of an impromptu session at the A&M Studios (where the Loved Ones recorded in the '60s) and was produced by Graham Owens who has worked with the likes of Skyhooks and Renee Geyer. It received good reviews in the Melbourne rock press and airplay on Victorian FM radio, charting for nine weeks at 3RRR.

It's an interesting debut. The tautness of the live band (since joined by ex-News drummer Dorland Bray) is suggested, but on record - and with the lyric sheet glaring up from the table in front - the main impression is one of negativity. The songs come over like vignettes of resentment with each registered group of repressed/oppressed getting equal time. Take another look at the live set: there's the song about mental institutions, then the one on gay discrimination; the expose of rock industry power-boys and the expose of an *Advertising Man;* there's *Man In The News,* and then there's the one where Malcolm Fraser gets a first line mention in a ten minute song called *What Have I Done?*

I'm told *Advertising Man* comes from Greg's career in that field, and the anti-industry sentiments may owe as much to various Benders' experience as record company reps as to musicians' frustration. Unfortunately there's a juvenile self-righteousness to these and several other songs. Exhibit One: *You Make Me Pewk,* everything you wouldn't expect from a band who say they don't have punk overtones, right down to the mis-spelled title. It's introduced as a "tender love song" so I assume it's sarcastic. It's not clever. Exhibit Two: a self-consciously original look at monkey groping (or vice versa) called *Long Hairy Fingers,* and Exhibit Three: *Sam,* a not-at-all original look at the fun to be had with plastic dolls. Bryan Ferry and The Police had considerably more fun.

The Benders remain a rewarding band to see and a rewarding band to listen to, even if they are still finding their way around the lyrical approach. They take risks by working their opinions into their music, just as they've taken risks in every other step of their development. As a band they are tremendously self-motivated and independent-minded. It'll be worth seeing what they develop into, and, whatever the reservations, it's well worth seeing them en route.

Elly McDonald

A Little Murder can be a lotta fun

Little Murders is the name of an excruciatingly funny film made in 1971 by Alan Arkin, starring Eliot Gould, Marcia Rodd and Donald Sutherland; Little Murders is also the name of a band making a name for themselves in Melbourne.

Rob Griffiths, Little Murders' main man, who hasn't even seen the movie. "I always thought Small Faces was a great name for a band, and then I saw 'Little Murders' on a Valhalla poster, and I thought it was great."

Oddly enough, Rob had the name before he even had a band to put it to. Last year, he recorded several songs with his previous outfit, Fiction, one of the few Melbourne punk bands to resist the Suicide schmere. When Fiction broke up, Rob retained the material they'd recorded, and eventually decided he'd like to have some of it released.

Under the Little Murders moniker, a single - *Things Will Be Different,* backed by *Take Me, I'm Yours* - was released by Au Go Go Records.

Both *Things Will Be Different* (written by Rob) and *Take Me, I'm Yours* (by Rob in collaboration with Fiction guitarist Rob Wellington, who's now fronting the International Exiles) were equally infectious pop songs that recalled the melody and bounce of '60s English bands like The Who and the Pretty Things.

"We had to 'promote' it, so I had to get a band," is Rob's simple explanation.

Former Fiction bassist, Ken Hamilton, was available, so he was enlisted immediately. Clinton Small, a solo artist who'd also recorded for Au Go Go - an EP, *Crack In The Wall* - was invited to join, as lead guitarist. Finally, a drummer, Rod Flegg, was recruited.

The single reached the higher rungs of 3RRR-FM's Top 40, garnered excellent reviews in the Australian rock press, and attracted interest in England, where it should soon be released by Missing Link, through Stage One Records.

"The record came out at the end of October last year," Rob said, "and we started playing around that time. We started doing country gigs, and people went wild. So we came back here..."

At that time, however, Little Murders. were unaccustomed to playing before demanding crowds. Their early Melbourne gigs were hampered by nervousness, a lack of any sort of visual projection and Clinton Small's penchant for Jimmy Page-esque guitar histrionics. Supporting the Boys Next Door was a turning point though.

"Up till then, we thought it was just music," Rob explained, "then we realised, standing next to the Boys Next Door, we were dressed like gardeners!"

Consequently, Little Murders tightened their image - Rob's obsession with '60s English pop culture (he is a Pom, by the way) is beginning to permeate the band's visual, as well as musical aesthetic.

"When I write songs, it's after I've listened to a lot of '60s records.

"I'm not a very good musician, and it's really hard for me to write. I just base my songs on those... like, I don't *steal,* or at least not *intentionally*... I reckon it'd be great to 're-write' *Midnight Hour,* but it's impossible.

"My songwriting's still trashy. See, I can't play all that well - I just do these little chord things - so I've got to get this melody going. I like to sing a tune."

Rob's rough song drafts are beaten into shape by the band, and the finished product invariably fits perfectly into a set that includes covers like *Midnight Hour* itself, the Easybeats' *I'll Make You Happy* and the Troggs' *With A Girl Like You.*

Little Murders' appeal is simply that they play catchy tunes, with a danceable back-beat, free of any sort of pretension whatsoever.

"My main ambition is to write a song as good as *Waterloo Sunset,"* Rob finally decides. "If I could do that... I could just stop."

Clinton Walker.

Meet me at the Singles bar

The Singles are earning a reputation as a bright, young pop group but they're akin to their fellow bands at Doublethink in ways quite distinct from the mid-sixties British bands. After all, when the Beatles toured Australia these lads were in nappies; singer/guitarist Andrew Campbell claims he had never even heard a Beatles' album until this year. They are not a part of the mod revivalist trend but they bring to mind the heyday of pop because, like the bands of that era, the Singles are pure, unadulterated *adolescence.* Implying what? Well, try spontaneity, perkiness, tunefulness and a romanticism that verges on coy for starters. Add fresh perspective and a degree of bravado, then include arrogance, self-centredness and a short attention span.

All the songs are original. "It's better to build from your own material," says Andrew. "Why do a cover when you can write a song yourself? I sort of *had* to start writing because I'd taught myself to play guitar and I never could work out the chords and things off a record to get covers together. It was so much easier to do it myself!"

The Singles' ideal is to be forever as innocent as a ten year old. A Peter Pan complex? Yep, it seems they'll go along with that one. They stress youth as a major asset. So when the Singles do a love song do they Know what they're singing about? "No," says Andrew, all trusting, untroubled eyes. Disarming naivety indeed! The love songs place a lot of emphasis on exclusivity, which would have to be a teenage conceit.

Count how many times the expression 'the only one' crops up... It's all blithely unselfconscious. In a song like *The Perfect Girl* it is hard to tell to what extent the band is even aware of irony - *'the perfect girl would have to be/the very very same, so much like me...'*

"We write songs about having fun. Actually a lot of the time it's about how we're *not* having fun," explains Andrew. "We're not rebelling against anything and we're not political." Politics are not their safest subject if Rod's very loud post-performance ravings are any indication. Looking like a reject from Madness in his porkpie hat and brothelcreeper shoes, he exhibits the same brand of reactionary thoughtlessness that particular ska band has come to be tagged with.

"Behind every big band there's clothes and a good manager - the Beatles and Carnaby Street, Sex and the Sex Pistols," says bassist Rod Brunel. "The Singles just haven't found their style and their shop yet." For now, they wear what is comfortable.

At the time of writing they aren't all legally entitled to darken the doors of the pubs where they play, but the Singles plan on being around for some times.

"When we're thirty five we'll be just like Styx, tottering about going 'Yeah man, we missed the Beatles, we missed new wave, but we're still here and we're still playing our same old original stuff," laughs Rod, who quickly blanches, horrorstruck. "Please don't say we compared ourselves to Styx!"

He's right. *That* is one comparison which could not be more irrelevant.

Elly McDonald

Meo - Two for Five; David Briggs - One. More results as they come to hand.

The ME(O) Generation comes of age

This is the fifth gig at the Marconi Ballroom, billed as "Australia's largest BYO late night rock venue" and finally giving lie to the old adage the bigger the better. It's actually a converted cinema complete with gruesome chandeliers, Art Deco wall ornamentation and two flights of dais leading up to an unreasonably high stage. Pushing through saloon-style swing doors the unwary punter is swallowed up in voluminous dark, occasionally rent by garish lighting of pink or green. In the shadow of the walls lurk black garbage bag covered tables flanking a naked, polished dancefloor. Firmly fastened to their tables are the usual display sample variations on early '60s beatnik mode: the straight, checked trousers and flat black shoes; the wide, vinyl belts; the broad-striped, slit-necked tops; dishevelled blood-red hair...

There's enough height in the ceiling to book the Heavenly Host, but tonight in keeping with its policy the Marconi has three upwardly mobile young Melbourne bands. The Marconi aims to provide an alternative to the few, small urban venues which are prepared to book the more adventurous cases of artistic potential. It could be argued these bands are shown to better advantage in a place where at the very least they're aware there's an audience out there, instead of in a concert situation without a concert-sized crowd, and all three bands tonight suffer from poor acoustics and inept mixing. The line-up is the Editions, International Exiles and Meo 245.

Meo 245 take the stage. Their sound is based on a solid wall powerbeat that smothers the air with heavy distortion and brings the dancefloor to life. Writhing enthusiastically and sliding on the supergloss, the audience seem to like them and the set carries a satisfying sense of 'wholeness'. There's drive and anger but no direct threat. Moreover it's all very fast and very heavy, lyrics reinforcing that dramatised angst that's all the rage. Singer/guitarist Paul Northam alternately tearing at the chords in frenzied frustration or wringing them out with grandoise, measured licks. Subtlety is not their primary asset. In the total sound context Paul Brickhill's keyboards give rise to speculation on an Ultravox confined to hammer and anvil.

Basically, Meo 245 can be reduced to a formula. Heavy drum intro, keyboards state theme, vocals reiterate, maximum mileage from repetition, it gets louder... Abrupt end. They do it very well and are highly effective - that is, an entertainment. A good show and a good night out.

The two Pauls have been in bands together going back about ten years and write most of the material for Meo 245, although they consider the new songs that are band compositions to be the most representative of future direction. Paul Brickhill has a Bachelor of Music and professes catholic musical tastes and background. He says he is currently "de-schooling", and sees rock'n'roll less as an end in itself than as "a part of my learning process." Paul Northam is similarly articulate and shares an educated social background, but, being more visually-oriented, opted for Art School. The two grew up in Tasmania.

Two years ago they moved to Melbourne with a band called Guided Tour, more pop inclined than Meo 245, and spent some time acclimatising themselves, just learning to work the ropes. Meo 245 came about when they teamed up with another Tasmanian, drummer, Cam Laird, and a co-veteran from his last band Danger Dancer, Mick Wilson on bass. Cam's stormtrooper drumming is the backbone of the band. His rhythms are distinctive and he attacks them as if with methodical intent to demolish his kit. To hammer it home, Mick plays bass that pounds like a beating heart, holding the neck almost vertical at times as he stands looking shell-shocked in uniform black, a plain tailored shirt (haven't I seen that somewhere before?) atop shiny black leggings.

In *White Lies* the drums burst out like gunshots and Paul Northam - close cropped hair, tall and lean as he stands side-on to the audience with his guitar neck levelled straight down the centre - momentarily resembles Robert De Niro in *Taxi Driver* as the psychotic killer practising his *"You talking to me?"* routine in a full-length mirror. There's the same dark feeling of tensions about to explode, and because this is rock'n'roll and the band is Meo 245, explode they do. Meo 245 at their best: hard-edged, unpretentious energy that doesn't let up.

Elly McDonald

Meo 245 have now been snapped up by Little River Band's David Briggs who has produced four trax from the band. The first single will be released on Briggs' independent label, Rough Diamond, within a few weeks.

THE BATTLE OF THE BANDS

Are you ready for screamsville, again?

Remember Hoadley's Battle of the Sounds? Back in the late sixties/early seventies, victory in this event meant instant recognition, and a place on an Honour roll boasting bands like The Twilights (1966), and The Master's Apprentices and Doug Parkinson's In Focus (1969). Well, after 1970, the award was losing credibility, people were losing interest, and subsequently the last Battle of the Bands took place in 1972, Sherbet being the eventual winners, ironically going on to become the most successful. Prizes then included trips overseas and huge cash sums attracting the cream of Oz talent.

It is history now that only a couple of years separated the demise of the Battle and the reign of supergroups Sherbet, Skyhooks, Hush and AC/DC, undeniably, until recent times, the healthiest state in which the Oz scene has ever been.

When the local industry stagnated after this period, appearances were deceptive, as behind the scenes a new breed of musician was evolving. A certain few bands surfaced, and urged on by their success and the excitement of new wave music the alternative bands grew until the underground circuit could contain them no longer. The result was the Sydney (and later Melbourne) band explosion.

The attitudes and freshness of this revolt have led to the mass acceptance and commercial success of bands like The Angels, Mi-Sex, The Radiators and others and has forced commercial radio to take a look at the breeding grounds of tomorrow's biggies.

Hence the reincarnation of the contest now billed as The Violet Crumble Battle of the Sounds, co-sponsored by 2SM, 3XY and 4IP. A share of over $28,000 prize money (nationally), two recording contracts up for grabs and major publicity that can't be ignored, had up to the end of April lured some 250-300 bands in Melbourne alone.

Less than one in four of those bands will get as far as competing in a live performance. Recent tapes of the band must be submitted for scrutiny by judges as yet unnamed and unselected. Sue Smith of 3XY's Promotions Department was not at liberty to discuss the balance of the judging panel, nor the numbers constituting it, but stated that it would consist of representatives of the media, record companies (presumably Wizard), and other areas of the industry.

The tapes will be evaluated, and in each state sixty chosen to take part in the heats. Three heats of twenty bands each are scheduled to take place in suburban town halls and will be open to the public. Bands selected 1st, 2nd and 3rd will receive, $750, $250 and $100 respectively, and progress to the state finals. The State finals, each comprising nine bands take place at major venues, Melbourne's being at Festival Hall.

Prizemoney for the State Finals is as follows: 1st - $2000, 2nd - $1000 and $500 for the third placing.

This prizemoney is accompanied by return airfare and accommodation in Sydney, where the three top bands of each State play at the Hordern Pavillion on Sunday, August 31. The nine hopefuls will vie for the first place prize of $5000 and a Wizard recording contract. Second receives $2000 while third placegetter takes home $1000. On top of this, Michael Gudinski picks any band of his choice, regardless of placing, for the Mushroom Special Award of another recording contract.

These prizes are no doubt impressive but competitors must abide by a list of 25 restrictions. Stringent limits are laid down for length of songs (4 minutes), number of songs (2 in the heats, 3 in State finals) and time involved in change-over (5 minutes). Precise details concerning equipment are set, including the proviso that the Organisers' drums, amplifiers, PA, microphones and lights are to be used exclusively, and band members are responsible for all damage. Tuning on stage is forbidden and special equipment, eg. Gizmo, Syndrum may only be used when a permit has been obtained from the Organisers.

The judging system is a little controversial. It is as follows; dress and appearance (10%), audience reaction (10%), selection of numbers (15%), stage presentation (15%), and a whopping 50% for musical ability.

Firstly, audience reaction is often irrelevant in such a concert. Some local bands tend to have a cult neighbourhood following, or could gather one for the day making the audience less than impartial.

Secondly, who gives a stuff about dress? It may be contrary to the band's image to wear, for example, anything but street clothes. On the other hand, an English-oriented new wave band can rely heavily on theatrics and weird clothing, putting them at a distinct advantage.

Thirdly, the musical ability allocation of 50% could turn out to be a gross mistake. It could also encourage drum and guitar solo indulgences drawing attention away from a band's tightness, compatability and musical impact as a whole, not as a group of virtuosos. Where can the judges give points for energy, for excitement or for the enjoyment of band members, not just the audience, derive from the performances? Why should any performance be classified under five narrow headings?

Also, it would make a more interesting spectacle, and ensure that judges not go unchecked, if each one's score is read out at the end of every act.

Overall, it must be hoped by anyone interested in Oz music that the Battle of the Sounds be accepted and taken seriously. If it is looked down upon the whole purpose is destroyed. A good sign is the entry of some of Melbourne's lower rung but better known pub bands, obviously welcoming the opportunity to reach the top without having to conform to the artistic and time limits imposed by the accepted pub grind/ agency circuit. Here's hoping.

Mark Green

The Royal Charity Performance

Sydney Opera House, Tuesday 27th May, 1980

Olivia Newton-John

TOTALLY HOT
36771

Please Don't Keep Me Waiting
Dancin' Round And 'Round
Talk To Me
Deeper Than The Night
Borrowed Time
A Little More Love
Never Enough
Totally Hot
Boats Against The Current
Gimme Some Lovin'

GREAT HITS
35375

If Not For You/Banks Of The Ohio
Winterwood/Take Me Home Country
Road/Amoureuse/Let Me Be There
I Love You, I Honestly Love You
Long Live Love/If You Love Me Let
Me Know/What Is Life/If We Try
Music Makes My Day

GREATEST HITS
36449

Changes
Every Face Tells A Story
Let It Shine
Come On Over
Love Song
Have You Never Been Mellow
Don't Cry For Me Argentina
Please Mr. Please
Something Better To Do
Jolene
The Air That I Breathe
Don't Stop Believin'
Making A Good Thing Better
Sam

MAKING A GOOD THING BETTER
36277

DON'T STOP BELIEVIN'
36023

COME ON OVER
35847

CLEARLY LOVE
35704

HAVE YOU NEVER BEEN MELLOW
35465

LONG LIVE LOVE
35230

ALSO AVAILABLE

If Not For You
34320

Olivia
34658

LET ME BE THERE
35026

OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN
45377/8

also available
OLIVIA'S duet with ANDY GIBB, "I Can't Help It" K7851

ALBUM OR CASSETTE

NO EPILOGUE IN SIGHT FOR GENESIS

Drawing Room Genesis (Pic: Jill Furmanousky)

BY MICHAEL SMITH

"Just a moment. I'll just go upstairs to the other phone." The smooth, educated baritone voice of Michael Rutherford finally comes through the telephone receiver and I can start my interview.

The occasion for this expensive exercise is the release of the new Genesis album, *Duke*, the group's tenth in a little over eleven years and their strongest offering since *A Trick of the Tail* and the departure of long-standing guitarist Steve Hackett. An archetypal English Art-school techo-rock outfit, Genesis has, over the years and despite either critical neglect or disparagement, produced some of the most stunning, virtuoso songs and albums in this particular style. Never as obscure or affected as Yes lyrically, or given to pyrotechnical musical exhibitionism. Genesis has always tended to remain aloof from the star-maker machinery, preferring the careful artistic development and refinement of their own idiosyncratic style of music. For a long time their only concession to audiences was the theatricality provided by Peter Gabriel, who has gone on to carve a creditable solo career since leaving the band. The band went on to prove that Genesis' music didn't necessarily depend on Gabriel. The brilliant *Trick of the Tail,* followed by the moody *Wind and Wuthering* and an exhuberant double live set *Seconds Out,* showed that Genesis was, if anything, gaining audiences since Gabriel's departure. What looked like a death-blow came with Steve Hackett's departure, but again the band bounced back, this time as a trio with the aptly titled *...And Then There Were Three.* Now, after a break in which Phil Collins tried to sort out his marital problems and both keyboards-player Tony Banks and bass/guitarist Michael Rutherford put out solo albums, the band is together again and seems to be strong as ever.

So here I am, talking to Rutherford about the new album and his own solo effort, *Smallcreep's Day*, and about whether Genesis can really keep a foothold in rock music after all these years and the passing of trends.

"The album took about 2½ months to record, with most of it being written in the studio by the three of us." Rutherford is one of those soft-spoken thoughtful people that aren't really meant to be pop-stars, preferring to simply write, record and play music, which makes it very hard for an interviewer to get more than a few sentences out of him before you're confronted with an embarrassing silence that either means he's thinking about what else to add to his statement or that he hasn't really any more to say. The band is perfectly aware of the fine line between wanting to present your art to the people for appreciation and losing that initial creativity in a desperate grasping for applause; as they point out in second track *Duchess, on Duke.* Still, the publicity's got to be done and Rutherford courteously continues.

"Each of us had quite a few songs written individually before we got down to recording the album, as always happens, so we ended up with enough material for two albums at least and used the strongest. The emphasis has always been on group writing efforts."

Genesis initially developed out of a school friends' song-writing collective, each contributing material that would eventually become a group song. The original line-up's first effort was a forty-five minute epic which has never been released or recorded but from which they still occasionally pinch bits, Michael confesses. Tony Banks and Rutherford are the only two in the band from the original line-up.

"There isn't really any definite concept behind the album, although there are a couple of numbers with compatible themes. The cover concept, using French cartoonist, Koechlin's, children's book character to tie things together was rather an after-thought. "I suppose he just represents the little Everyman character who is a bit confused by life in the '80s; some of the songs reflect that worry, though there is no consistent line through the album. But, if you look at *Turn it on Again (the single from the album in Oz),* it explores the relationship between lonely people and the TV characters they become involved with - often their only real friends in the outside world. *Man of our Times (written by Rutherford)* is another way of looking at that frightened little figure, defiantly representing his times but a bit empty behind the front."

Genesis is no Angry-young-working-class outfit. Michael told me that much of their inspiration comes from reading. Tony Banks took his cover concept for his solo LP, *A Curious Feeling,* from Ainslie Roberts' illustrations for *Aboriginal Dreamtime Myths,* and several songs, such as *To Waters of Lethe* are based on literary pieces. Steve Hackett cops some D.H. Lawrence with a song named *The Virgin and the Gypsy.* Quite a clever lot: together with the Gabriel/Fripp/Eno crowd, Genesis has introduced some of the better musical experimentation to the public.

"The lyrics tend to be the least important aspect of the song.initially, so, unlike Peter's satirical word experiments that used to fill our albums, we tend to write for emotions, using tonal backdrops to create moods in our lyrics. And we like to tell stories too, but perhaps not with Peter's sting. We all read quite a lot, though not really in a studied way. *(Rutherford was doing a degree in English before he got involved in the rock music business. Otherwise, it seems he was just as likely tc have ended up as a Public Servant in the Foreign Office.)* Science Fiction I read a lot of, but I'm getting sick of it. There's just so much badly written stuff that I've gone off it. I tend now to stick to 19th century novels, the classics I suppose, because they really spent the time on developing their art - real craftsmen."

A book inspired his own album *Smallcreep's Day* which is based on the life story of one Peter Currell Brown. This chap apparently spent all his life in a factory on the assembly line and wrote the book when he retired and found himself unable to cope with the world outside the factory.

"It's a concept album, or at least one side of it is on this man's biography, whom I describe as Smallcreep. After all those years he's faced with making his own decisions. It's not really a solo album, though they released it as such. There's always a scepticism about a band-member who suddenly steps out and tries a solo thing. Look, for instance, at the albums the members of Yes did. On the album, I had the help of Anthony Phillips on keyboards - he was an original member of Genesis - and I first got involved in song-writing when I co-wrote things at school with him; Noel McCalla is on vocals, Simon Phillips on drums and Morris Pert is on percussion. David Hentchel, who has worked with Genesis for a few years now co-produced the album, so its not strictly a solo LP. We did it at Abba's recording studio in Stockholm."

I asked Michael about his guitar style which tends to sound very similar to Steve Hackett's - moody, fluid, and understated instead of your usual 100mph guitar hero soloist.

"The guitar style Steve used to have in Genesis was very much a part of the sound Genesis was already using before he came into the band *(Hackett took over from Phillips after their second LP 'Trespass').* Part of the reason for Steve's departure was to expand from that stylistic limitation, as the band is much more oriented toward keyboard than guitar. I just naturally took over the guitar part in the same vein.

"Actually, with this album, I've gone back to recording the rhythm tracks on bass instead of bass pedals as I did on *... And Now We Are Three.* On that album I was worrying so much about guitar that the bass pedal option made the numbers lose some of their power. This way, I think we have regained some of the drive we had on the earlier albums."

Surprisingly, for a band that has been written off as being on its last legs or irrelevant dinosaurs, the album has been doing very well thank you, entering the Top Ten in England and Europe. They can still fill concert halls and both Michael's and Tony's albums were released to critical acclaim and gained fairly healthy chart-listings. I asked whether he thought the band could continue into the '80s in the same vein and survive.

"We seem to be more popular now than we ever were, despite the punk/new wave thing, which I thought was very healthy and quite enjoy, but I can't pretend to be playing that kind of music. I feel that we have created something worthwhile in our music that has as much right to expression as any other music form and the fact that we don't really fit any going trend doesn't really worry us. I mean, we've been unfashionable for a lot more years than we've been fashionable, *if* we've ever been that, and survived and continue playing our own kind of music all the same. When we put out *The Lamb Lies Down on Broadway,* we got hauled over the coals by the critics, though admittedly a double album is always a difficult listening experience, but today people come up to us and say it was a masterpiece. There are still some things that are very close to us on that album."

Did he or the others in the band ever see Peter or Steve these days?

"Oh yes. We see quite a bit of Steve. In fact, Phil *(Collins)* drummed on a couple of tracks on Steve's new album, *Spectral Mornings.* But with Peter, it's a case of if we happen to be crossing paths. Both of us are so heavily committed to touring we never really get a chance to socialise any more. Same with most bands."

RORY GALLAGHER
TOP
PRIORITY
TOUR

RORY GALLAGHER — JUNE 1980 TOUR

Wednesday	June 18	Perth	Concert Hall
Friday	June 20	Newcastle	Palais Theatre
Saturday	June 21	Sydney	Capitol Theatre
Monday	June 23	Adelaide	Festival Theatre
Tuesday	June 24	Melbourne	Palais Theatre
Wednesday	June 25	Hobart	Grenada Tavern
Friday	June 27	Brisbane	Cloudlands Ballroom
Saturday	June 28	Surfers Paradise	Gold Coast Playroom

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35712

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"DEUCE"37313 "BLUEPRINT"37310

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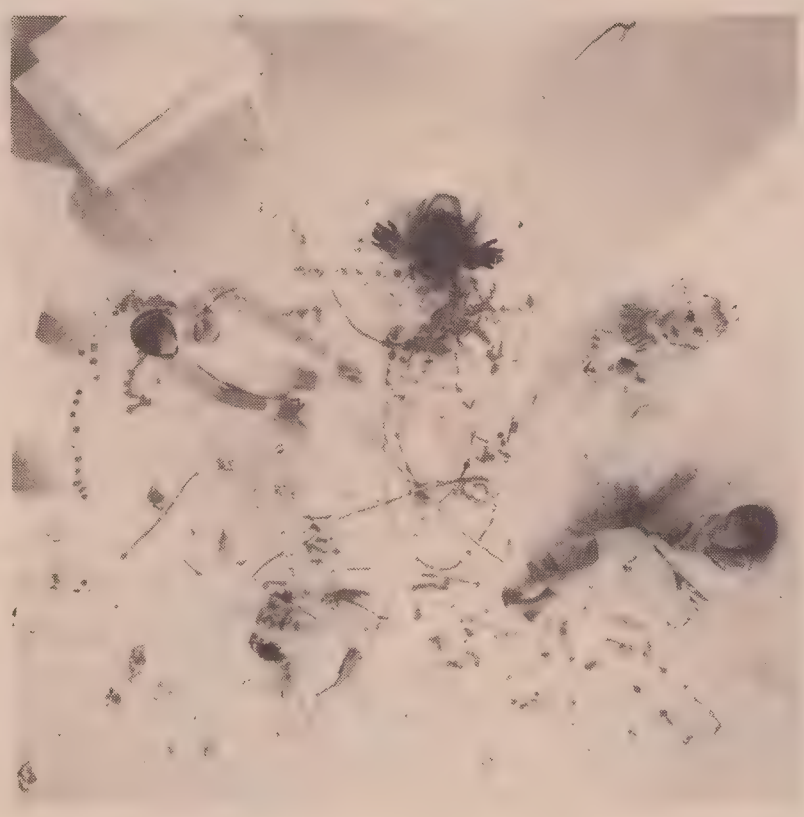

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The Aliens Next Door

I LIVED NEXT DOOR TO AN ALIEN AND LOVED IT!

JOHN DIMASE meets up with DANNY JOHNSON of THE ALIENS and discovers a band with intelligence, sharpness and a sense of futuristic fun.

The Aliens are currently riding a crest of a wave, their current single *Follow That Girl* was picked up by the media and gave the band healthy exposure. Meanwhile their debut album, *Translator,* after only a couple of weeks is climbing briskly up the national charts. Still, if any band had a half decent chance of making it, it was The Aliens. For the last years or so they have been one of the hottest bands on the pub crawl. In Melbourne, in particular around Carlton, they reign supreme. It was probably only natural that Mushroom picked up on them and gave them producer David Tickle. Tickle is all of 21 and he came out to Australia to produce Split Enz' *True Colors.* He heard a tape of The Aliens and hastily arranged recording sessions and twelve straight days of recording.

And now comes the media push. When I arrived at Mushroom House in St. Kilda the band had just finished photo sessions and were preparing for an afternoon of interviews. I meet bassist Danny Johnson and we settle down to a chat. Before getting on to the album I asked him about the band's background.

"We came over from Adelaide in '78," he says. *"We"* is Danny and Geoff Stapleton, guitarist, vocalist, keyboard player and, onstage, an hilarious teller of stories. "We went through a few line up changes before settling on this line up with Greg Webster *(guitars and synthesizer)* and Robbie Grosser *(drums)."*

The Vibrators' first album was a big influence and when The Sex Pistols happened they were hooked. When Danny and Geoffrey came to Melbourne they had the concept of what they wanted firmly in their minds.

"We wanted a band that was very melodic, but that still had the energy. And you had to be able to hear the words and everything. We wanted it to be very poppy. We wanted it to be a four piece because a five piece is too fragmented."

I asked him about the 'power pop' label that most writers have pinned on the band. Is it a fitting appellation?

"Well, I've always been inspired by high powered music. 'Power pop' is a term that was coined after punk. Power pop is exactly what it is although I've never bothered to categorize it. I never really think about it," he answers with genuine nonchalance.

How does he explain their sudden popularity as a live band? The word of mouth advertising these boys received equals anything bestowed on the likes of The Sports and, more currently, Flowers.

"We put a bit of thought into the whole concept. We had the whole image with the black and white thing. We wanted this one hunk of solidarity that you could call The Aliens."

But isn't the whole thing a little contrived?

"It is contrived because it is something that is so obviously a front. But it isn't contrived in that they were just spontaneous ideas that really just happened. To us the name, The Aliens, had nothing to do with the *Alien* movie, that came out after we formed. Our name had more to do with the fact that we were from another city so we were aliens."

I suspect he is being a little glib here. After all, isn't it all a little too neat that the name of the band should fall into place with a computer age sensibility? Song titles like *The Machine Wants To Know, Till The Beast Is Dead* and *Bomb Squad* sum up their major preoccupations.

"Well, that stems from our characters. Especially Geoffrey and myself who are absolute science fiction addicts. I just read two or more books of it a week. So that's really how the name and the songs came about."

So your love of sci-fi is an obvious inspiration for the futuristic gloom of the songs?

"Right. I mean you see it around you every day. Machines are getting better, cars are getting better, stereos are getting better. Technology really is taking over. But on the other side of the coin we've got a song like *Follow That Girl* but we are very much looking into the future even if it is only dreaming, you know, just wondering where mankind is heading . . ."

So does he see himself getting into all the new technology espoused by people like Gary Numan and John Foxx?

"Yeah, to a certain extent. We wouldn't go overboard like those guys. We have some new songs, like a song called *Love's Square* by Gregory. He sings it through a vocoder so it comes out like a mechanical voice. We used that on *The Machine Wants To Know.* We use lots of synthesizer but we are still primarily a rock band. So there's always going to be that guitar thing. There's always going to be that melody line. Electronic music has so many options. We use it very, very sparingly at the moment because we like that raunchy two guitar sound. Electronic music has got an amazing texture. If we can get that texture with the drive of rock, we'll have something pretty amazing."

Having exhausted the subject of electronic pop I ask Danny if he thinks of The Aliens as being primarily a Carlton band?

"It seemed to take off from there, from places like Martini's. We aren't a Carlton band. To me a Carlton band is someone like Skyhooks and Sports, and we aren't like that. None of us live there. We did make it much quicker in the inner city because we are all city people. Maybe we just give off that feeling. Carlton people just like things that are a little off beam."

Danny is being modest there. Their success has to be largely due to their injection of personality into live shows. Each member of the band has a distinct and separate identity. Danny is the ever smiling, bass player who goes at it like a work horse. Greg Webster with his almost Eno-esque visage portrays no emotion. At least no earthly emotions. He is "The Alien" of the group. Over on the other side of the stage Geoffrey Stapleton comes off as a solid, smiling showman. A lot of Oz bands could and should take note of The Aliens masterful stage presentation.

It seems to be the appropriate time to broach the subject of the album.

Was it a daunting prospect working with someone with as much experience as David Tickle? After all he has worked with the likes of Blondie, The Knack and Racey. Did that background give him an aura of success that made you place all your trust with him?

"No. Not really because we never put all of our trust with anyone. The only people we trust is ourselves because we know each other. We are the unit and outside of us is the rest of the world. We did have a trust just from working together."

The resultant album is one that, in the mind of this writer, is an impressive effort. Yet it does show signs of being hurriedly recorded and a couple of critics have brought the band to task about this.

"Well, if we had more time we could have made a better album. The thing I liked about doing it so fast is that we didn't have that sense of studio sterility that a lot of albums have. We were raging, we were right on top of it, and we were very happy. A lot of the songs are first takes and we kept them because they had the life in them. They weren't necessarily the best we could have played, but they had life in them. If we'd done them forty or fifty times they wouldn't have had it. When I say we did the album in twelve days, they were bloody long days every one of them. We got very little sleep.

"I would have liked a stronger guitar sound on a couple of tracks. I would have done some of the vocals again. We didn't have time to sit back and really analyse. There are just a few little things like that that we aren't going to repeat on the next album."

So, what does the future hold for The Aliens? How do they see themselves progressing?

"Well, at the moment we just want to get out and promote the album. After that I can see ourselves opening wide up. We'll be bringing in the electronics a lot more. The main thing is working all this new technology into a song format. We have got a lot of different styles of music, we've got ballads, we've got some very electronic stuff, some very spacey Eno-style material and it is just a matter of working them into the concept of the show. The situation as it now stands is that I'll write maybe five songs and The Aliens will only ever get one of them. The Aliens is a concept of what the four of us do together. Individually we could all do albums with different styles of music and I guess that's why we are looking forward to doing in the distant future."

Another area of future involvement is video which will surely be the next big thing.

"It is just coming to the fore, especially with the threat of video disks. I just love it. I'm a TV addict. I go to the movies all the time so I'm just dying to get into it. We've just done a few film clips and I'm really happy with them. It's an amazing concept because it is sound *and* vision.

"With the video thing coming in, it means that we are now writing songs from a visual point of view. You have to think about how you are going to express a certain song on a visual screen, how people are going to look at it. You're virtually acting out a song. We want to get into it a lot more. It is just a pity that we don't have the money".

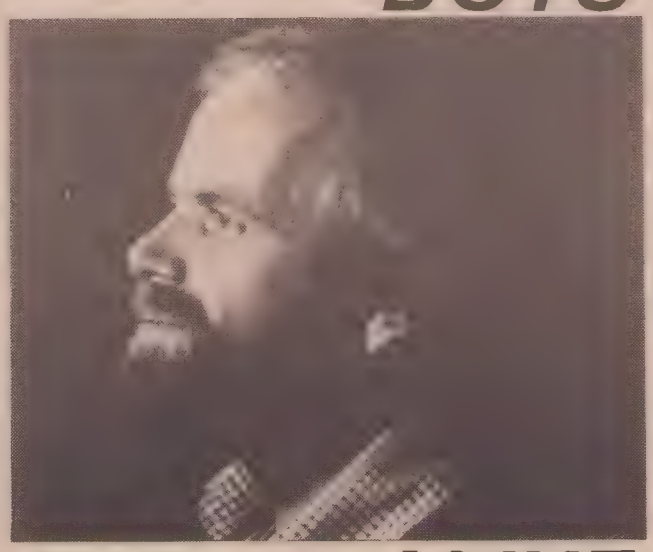
That appears to be the crucial point; money. When the video obsession really hits us, not only will a band have to have a producer, a manager, but they'll virtually have to have a film director too. Doesn't this spell the end for a lot of "garage" bands?

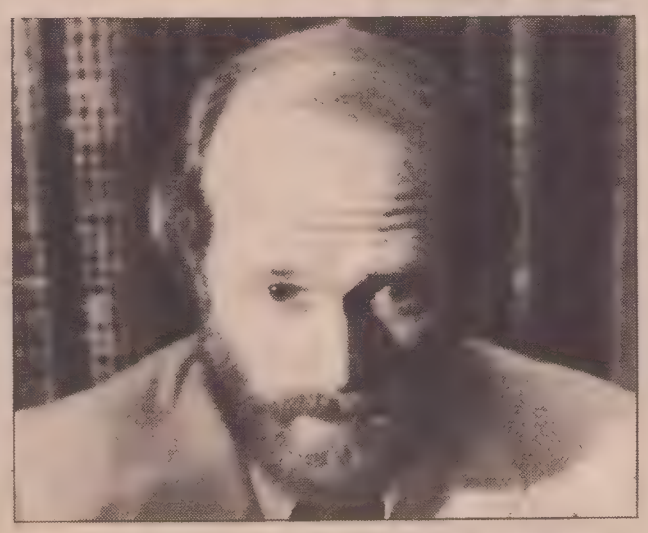
"I think it is still fine for garage bands. I mean The Flying Lizards are a bit of a garage band. Obviously the guy has got brilliant ideas. Any garage band that doesn't have brilliant ideas is not going to make it. The Flying Lizards hardly spent any money at all making those singles. They just realised that you can get an incredible sound out of cardboard boxes."

Danny is very aware of the negative effects of video dominated rock and roll. The media does consume a lot of artists at a very, very fast rate now. The result is that there are a lot of one hit wonders around because artists simply can't maintain a mystique. They burn out because of maximum exposure.

Danny Johnson is a very affable man. He is also very conscious of everything that's going on around him. He is simply bursting with ideas and a lot of self-confidence to see those ideas through. Given half a chance The Aliens could make a substantial contribution to rock.

KEEPING THE BEACH BOYS ALIVE ...JUST





Aging Superstars Make Bad (Part 1023), from a series by Nick Kent

"Interviews are for publicity" - Brian Wilson, 1976.

The message was bluntly worded: Epic Records' publicity department had received word from The Beach Boys' new manager Jerry Schilling that Brian Wilson was very much on a personality upsurge, had rid himself of the various quirks and kinks previously bedevilling his - to put it mildly - *eccentric* temperament and was ready to talk to the press at length about himself, his music and his problems.

In 1975, a year before The Beach Boys and Wilson's family decided to place the deeply troubled Wilson under psychiatric care, and such was the state of this enigmatic man's condition then that any journalistic confrontation would have proven disastrous, and thus was stonewalled.

Banished from his house to live in a small changing-hut by the pool because his degenerate behaviour had an unpleasant effect on his two daughters, Wendy and Camie, Wilson would spend his nights with friends - some genuine, others simply parasites. They obsessively snorted cocaine and heroin and boozed to horrific excess.

Considered an easy touch, several famous people, so-called 'celebrities' used Wilson's bank-account to sell their noses and would coerce him into purchasing large supplies of drugs. When his family 'froze' his bank account as an attempt to curtail his drug-taking, Wilson took to wandering the streets of LA, spending a lot of time in massage parlours, or else would stay with golden-nosed friends.

When allowed in his own house he would stay in his room for days on end, on the one hand gorging himself on junk-food and on the other, neurotically worrying about his gargantuan weight problem. Music held no interest for him and he would fitfully work up scraps of melodies on the piano, always failing to complete them.

In '76 the protective wall around Brian Wilson was suddenly demolished. A year previously, The Beach Boys' career had suddenly encountered a dramatic lift-off due to the success of a compilation album of oldies released by Capitol (the label they'd left five years ago so they could instigate what subsequently became a stormy liaison with Warner Brothers).

Endless Summer sprinted to the top of the US Charts and scored platinum on the strength of four sides of classic '60s Brian Wilson songs finding favour with a new generation of American teenagers. The EMI compilation *20 Golden Greats* did exactly the same in Britain.

The Beach Boys renaissance was on and all these new-found fans asked one question: "Where's Brian Wilson?"

So The Beach Boys needed Wilson to truly cement this rediscovered fervour. A psychiatrist was employed to draw him out of his shell and get him back to the piano where he would again bash out new compositions as if all those years lost in some psychic twilight zone had never existed. This psychiatrist, someone called Eugene Landy, instigated a programme of bullying tactics.

He forced Wilson to act the role of 'responsible member of society'; bullied him into writing songs; bullied him into going on stage with the group (even though Wilson's natural shyness of live shows had originally triggered the first of a number of nervous breakdowns) and bullied him into performing humiliating solo performances on networked US television. To get full mileage out of this specious ploy, Brian was made to do interviews, most of them farcical.

One of the most revealing was in *Oui* when Wilson - who is nothing if not candid - stated, "Today I want to go places - but I can't because of the doctor (Landy). I feel like a prisoner and I don't know where it's going to end... he would put the police on me if I took off and he'd put me in the 'funny farm'... I'm just waiting it out, playing along. That's what I'm doing. (Pause). Do you have any uppers?"

In most of these interviews Wilson would deliver maybe 20 minutes of badly remembered facts before asking his interrogator for cocaine or speed and then suddenly claim to be feeling ill and stalk off to his room.

His presence on stage with The Beach Boys was equally painful. Terrified, he couldn't sing properly and his piano playing and occasional bass-work were rarely in sync with the song. The band simply and corruptly *used* Brian Wilson.

The public was briefly fooled into going along with this whole sick charade, but it soon back-fired.

15 Big Ones, the album, around which the whole "Brian's Back" campaign was constructed, went Gold but was such a diabolical affair, it turned innumerable Beach Boy fans - old and new - against this shoddy, over-promoted soap opera of a group. Utterly uninspired and weary, the album was clearly intended only as therapy for Wilson's long-dormant production talents. Through pressure and greed it was released, resulting in the band publicly airing their grievances and criticisms. Both Carl and Dennis Wilson said they were dissatisfied with the record.

The far superior follow-up *The Beach Boys Love You* was what the record should have been in that it did have at least twelve new Brian Wilson songs. Unfortunately bad feeling within the group meant that Brian Wilson and Carl were the only two Beach Boys featured on the record at all; and to compound misfortune, the group's plan to leave Warners and go with Epic/CBS was discovered just before the release of *Love You* and consequently got negligible push in all important regions, condemning it to meagre sales.

The group's relationship deteriorated into two rival factions: Mike Love and Al Jardine's transcendental meditation smugness versus Carl and Dennis with the hapless Brian as pawn-in-the-middle. The full force of this vehement antipathy was reached in '78 when Love and Jardine tried to sack Dennis and so make Carl's clout within the group ineffective. Somehow a compromise was reached, but the dreadful *M.I.U. Album*, the band's final Warners release, was instigated by Love and Jardine. Both critics and punters ignored the product's pitiful contents.

In '79 there was an uneasy truce with the *L.A.* album beginning the band's contract with Epic.

For this record, Bruce Johnston returned having been ousted eight years earlier, and took on the producer's mantle to juggle together a democratically conceived collection spotlighting all five members in equal ratios. Even so, the record was still mediocre and included two utterly forgettable Brian Wilson collaborations and extended disco re-jigs of *Wild Honey* and *Here Comes The Night* that the group felt obliged to apologise for whenever they did them live.

When the group's latest album *Keepin' The Summer Alive* was released, critics had become so irritated by the group not fulfilling their promises and the cheap bickering, that most reviews slammed it more out of instinct than anything else.

Despite exploiting the absurd facade of The Beach Boys as eternal keepers of sun-kissed Californian innocence - five senile-looking middle-aged men with beards second only to ZZ Top's in terms of rampant growth posing as 'the voice of teenage summer' is not only the most ridiculous pose still being pulled in rock, it's downright perverted - the LP is still the best they have made since *Sunflower* some ten years previous. Certainly it's the first record since then that sounds like a real group effort instead of being a clumsily pieced together ratbag of tardy individual creations.

Also it possesses a freshness, wholeness and well-crafted sense of commitment well bolstered by six of Brian Wilson's strongest melodies conceived since he became 'the troubled genius' of far too many media investigations. With two excellent Carl Wilson songs and no references to transcendental meditation, I was happy to ignore the hysterical schmaltz of Johnston's *Endless Harmony* or the ridiculous conceit of retreading Chuck Berry's *Schooldays*.

At last The Beach Boys had delivered one decent album of songs deserving all that attention wasted on offensive garbage like *15 Big Ones*. One question remained: will all of us, shortchanged so badly before, wipe the slate clean and listen to the record with unbiased ears?

"I don't ever see myself making music as strong as some of the old stuff ever again." Brian Wilson

At least the band, Schilling and record company are aware of those prejudices. Consequently the corporate push from all quarters, from Carl Wilson's earnest confessionals/testimonials printed in *Rolling Stone* ("Remember that catch-phrase 'Brian's Back'? Well, Brian wasn't ready then... But now he's *really* back!") to the lavish TV Special *Going Platinum* soon to be aired on US television and based on the artistic renaissance of *Keepin' The Summer Alive* juxtaposed against earnest statements from 'the boys' regarding past foul-ups. And of course, there are the interviews; the one-more-time "Brian's-really-on-his-toes-again".

But first there was a viewing of *Going Platinum*. A crass, badly directed documentary hosted and narrated by *Rolling Stone's* Ben Fong-Torres, the film parried 'candid' studio footage and interviews with the band, manager and various prominent Epic personnel with dreadful onstage footage of the group miming to tracks from *Keepin' The Summer Alive*. Only Brian Wilson gave the lamentable affair any spark by dint of his amusing eccentricities: a sudden, eerie scream during a studio session when a song he'd written was starting to take shape; ridiculous attempts to give earnest replies to banal questions; the twitches of the great lumbering physique towering over the rest of the band as they walk along some cliched coastline at sunset.

Probably the most amusing piece was the camera constantly panning away from Brian during the mimed 'live' footage because of his inability to remain in sync. Then the bland turns to grim as manager Schilling, in that hideously 'mellow' voice that only Los Angeles habitues can attain, runs down a pat

Surfin' Saps

definition of each member's contribution to the group.

Carl Wilson is "the soul"; Mike Love "the energy source"; Brian Johnston "the diplomatist"; "And Brian Wilson is (reverent pause) Brian Wilson".

Just those two words say it all. The film cuts to Brian making some idiotic noise while Mike Love plays a cassette of some new song. The other members chuckle good-naturedly.

"Hey Honey, do you remember the time that guy at the airport said to Brian, 'Don't you get tired of being referred to as a genius?' Brian just stared at him, shrugged his shoulders and said 'No'."

Carl Wilson looks at his girlfriend. "Oh yeah," he laughs. "Uh, didn't he say 'Nah, it doesn't bother me'? Something like that anyway."

At four in the afternoon, Carl Wilson has been talking for two hours about The Beach Boys. Dubbed "the Henry Kissinger of the group" by Schilling, he understands the power of diplomacy. He is a master at the art of the inscrutable understatement. Most of the time he fields questions - some innocuous, some rather more weighty - using this natural technique of "Oh, gosh, yeah. I can see your point but you've got to understand that I'm just an easy-going guy and that's the way it is" self-effacement. Very occasionally, he lets down his guard and an utterly cynical chuckle cracks through the veneer.

Carl serenely nominates manager Schilling as "the true binding force" that caused The Beach Boys to call an internal cease-fire and brushes off Dennis' absence as "temporary".

"Dennis has come in for some real rough publicity over the last couple of years and he's kind of re-evaluating his life right now, y'know. He's on the new record... he came down to a couple of sessions."

He denies that Dennis, youngest Wilson brother, has permanently quit - a statement made to me by The Durocs' manager Kip Crones some months back when The Durocs' Scott Matthews took over Dennis' drum-seat. Carl, however, admits that Matthews plays drums on half the new album, while Ricky Fataar is also featured.

Regarding Johnston's role as producer, Carl says that "It was Brian's idea. Brian asked Bruce to help him onstage 'cos he was having trouble hitting some of those high notes, y'know. And it just went from there."

The extent of Johnston's present power is hard to gauge, but one telling moment comes when it's revealed that the song *When Girls Get Together* is in fact an out-take from *Sunflower* and was recorded at least ten years ago.

"I guess Bruce just ah... liked that song," Carl mutters unconvincingly, clearly sidestepping any animosity.

The dialogue always returns to Brian. *The Rolling Stone* quite regarding his eldest brothers full creative resurgence with the music on *Keepin The Summer Alive* is mentioned along with a reference to the dreaded Dr Landy.

Carl dodges the latter topic altogether, remarking with a certain strained nonchalance that "Back then ('76) maybe it should have read 'Brian's almost back'." He chuckles to himself.

"No, but Brian's real well now. I mean, he's totally into the group. Totally into playing live. Don't you recall" - he turns to his girlfriend again - "Brian saying 'Being on the road is my real home. It's my whole life now'?"

She nods. "Yeah, *right!* Brian's so into touring. He's always here in the office asking Jerry when we're playing."

Had this new attitude towards touring come via Brian's recent separation from his wife Marilyn? After 16 years the marriage had collapsed with his wife filing for divorce and taking their two children with her.

Carl elegantly evades the issue yet again. "It's hard to say just how that's affected Brian, y'know. But Marilyn brought Wendy and Camie to a gig in San Diego not long ago."

Talking about what's emphatically known as 'Brian's problem', Carl continues, "He's coping much, much better. I don't know. Maybe it was a bad acid trip he took that caused all that inner turmoil. That's what I figure, y'know.

"But, like I said, he's so much better now. He's back into his music and he's... he's on this big health kick. He's got these hot tubs in his new house, a 'jacoosi', sauna... you name it."

The Beach Boys' renaissance was on, and all these new-found fans asked one question: "Where's Brian Wilson?"

Brian Wilson is eating a vegetarian salad, a fork in one hand, a cigarette in the other. He is a clumsy, amiable hulk, inexpertly trying to play the perfect host. Obviously ill at ease, his discomfort is contagious. He apologises for the starkness of the house and clumsily goes through the usual social ritual of shaking hands.

"Uh... yeah now who's doin' the interview? Oh, you! Oh! (Laughs self-consciously) OK then... uh (he stops to look at me). Say, how old are you? 28... Wow, I'm 37. Maybe I should interview you. You look more like a rock star than me." He lets forth a disconcerting bellow, then checks himself.

I try to establish a casual rapport with Wilson whose sense of discomfort is becoming ever more imposing. I remark that Carl mentioned that this new house was fitted out with hot tubs, a health spa and a sauna.

"Sauna?" The word appears totally to disorientate him. He looks mystified for a moment, then suddenly lurches up.

"Hey! I'll show ya something really great about this place. Wanna see it?" He immediately motions towards the large bay windows "This is really neat." He simply opens the windows.

"See? Air! Fresh air! Umm Healthy! Let's keep 'em open. Umm. Neat! Hugh!... Healthy!"

Brian slumps back onto the couch. I suddenly notice the presence of a third party. "Oh, this is Diane." Brian awkwardly introduces his blonde companion who looks 16 and constantly has this inane grin on her face. She looks exactly like the perfect stereotype for an acid casualty waitress at an LA health food restaurant in a Woody Allen movie, 'cept Allen would probably name her Starchild or Moonbeam.

This vision of inane serenity - all teeth and cut-off jeans - beams forth throughout the interview. I find myself wondering just what she and Wilson must talk about when they're alone, and shudder at the thought.

"OK fire away". Another good-natured chuckle.

I mention certain songs that Wilson wrote that were a presage for the more intimate style of ballad that would reach total fruition on *Pet Sounds*. Wilson looks shocked for a second, before declaring, "Hey, emotional, those songs are very emotional maybe too... No, I forget... Yeah, when you make music that emotional it can really get to you, y'know."

Before I can ask another question or Wilson can settle on a train of thought, he goes off on some weird tangent.

"Say, what's the weather like over in England? Boy, I'm lookin' forward to comin' over. I haven't been to London since... oh, wow... 1964! Yeah, wow! Long time."

I don't even bother to remind him that he and The Beach Boys played London three years ago at a CBS convention.

With a small transistor radio placed next to the couch - the only sign of music in this vast desolate room - blaring out some anonymous AM hit as we speak, I ask Wilson if he listens to the radio a lot? Does he check out new sounds?

"No, I've only been listening to the radio for a week. Ever since the new album's been out. Haven't heard it played much. Don't know why. Seems like we're going through a real bad spell."

Wilson refers to 'we' constantly, presumably meaning The Beach Boys. Considering that he spent much of the '70s in exile from the group and at one point tried to totally destroy all bonds between himself and them, I enquire whether he views his musical career in terms beyond the group. He looks pained, then pensive.

"No, not at all. It's all I've got, y'know. The group."

So what gives him the most pleasure in life?

Again, the question is received with another wince and another pensive stare.

"Well, I'll tell ya one thing. I'm not into women anymore. (Pause). Music probably. Yeah, definitely. I like to sit down at the piano, y'know. Playing those chords. I love the way they look.

"Plus playing life. That's the biggest thrill. It's real spiritual".

When I ask him to define the term 'spiritual', he looks at me as if I'm crazy. By now, the pauses are getting longer and the camera shutter clicking is causing Wilson to flinche as if torturous electric shocks were being sent through his system. The man is obviously in pain, struggling to articulate for himself whilst his whole nervous system appears to be rebelling against his will.

It is becoming more and more painful, more exasperating to try and communicate with him. Certain reference points suddenly make him shudder. I name a song from a new album that I particularly like and he screams.

"I hate that song! I hate that song!"

Why did you put it on the record?

"I didn't. Bruce..."

This is becoming horrific. We talk about ego - something Wilson once had in excess and now seems to be without.

"Yeah, I used to be real... *competitive*. Not any more, though.

"Hey, did you hear that Elton John song *Ego*? I thought that was real funny. No, but like I say, ego can be dangerous. It can destroy you - that drive. It almost killed me. Almost drove me insane."

Wilson is now chain-smoking, flicking the ash into his half-eaten salad. Occasionally he digs a fork into the mess of chopped vegetables and cigarette ash.

"I don't see my mother much. She doesn't like The Beach Boys. Not since father died... My father and I, we never got on. He used to come down really hard on me. We used to fight all the time... No, I don't see anything for me beyond The Beach Boys. It's like they're all I've got. Y'know. No, I don't want to make a solo record. I don't see myself making music as strong as some of the old stuff ever again.

"Why? I don't know why. You dry up! I guess. It's like..."

Suddenly, he shudders and obviously in pain, lurches up from the couch and stammers an apology.

"I'm sorry. I feel real tired. It's late and I've got to see my psychiatrist real early tomorrow. Maybe we can talk some more then."

So, I've got my Brian Wilson interview, exactly 30 minutes in all. Feeling numb, slightly nauseous and desperate for some fresh air, I walk straight to the car. It has been a gruelling encounter and I feel like a parasite for intruding on Brian Wilson's private hell.

Brian's back - almost.

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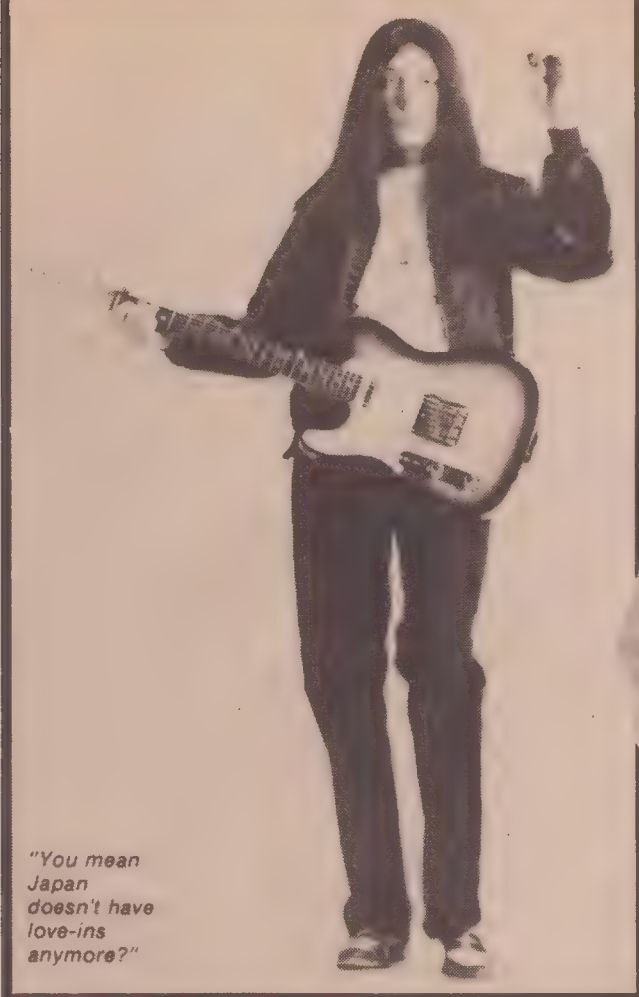

"You mean Japan doesn't have love-ins anymore?"

"You think maybe I should have gone to Argentina instead, jah?"

You've seen the film clip for PAUL McCARTNEY's 'Coming Up', but did you know all that dancin' and prancin' in various disguises were really dress rehearsals for Macca's determined bid to get back into Japan, heavily disguised. We didn't either, but the more we think about it...

"Well, I learnt from this Japanese player, so..."

"I'm a lumberjack I am, I am/I wear frilly knickers and..."

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"Here's a song your mother used to know..."

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RAM No. 75
RAM Rock Poll Winners, Led Zeppelin, 1977 Rock Diary, Australian Music; Heavy Metal; Glam Rock; Music Expo, The Real Thing, Chariot, The Elvis Industry; Mother Goose, Ozzie Osbourne, The Muppets, Sex Pistols, Mike Rudd, '77 the year that was

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Discover Graham Parker, Kevin Borich, Hip Easy Listening, Heavy Metal, Klaatu, AC/DC, Moose Malone, Red Symons, Ray Burton, Gloria Jones, Air Supply, Parachute, Status Quo, Leon Berger, John Paul Young, Dylan's Reynaldo And Clara, Dracula in Perth

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Summer rock, Boz Scaggs, Bob Dylan, Beach Boys, E.L.O., Jeff Lynne, Star Wars leads sci fi, Sleaze, Country rock, When Machines Played The Musicians, Billy Thorpe, Richard Clapton, Devo, Big Swifts, Sports, Elvis Presley's Estate, The Who movie, Computer concert tickets, Julie Covington, Ken Schaffer, Neils Hutchinson, Suburbs, Aleph

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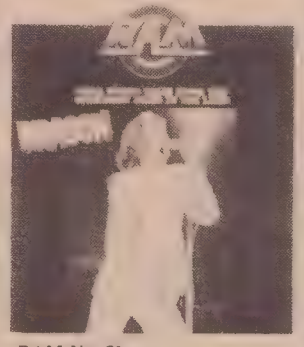
RAM No. 79
Band Equipment Guide: Amplifiers. The Beach Boys - the external youth elixir. The First Australian Report on groupies. E.L.O. 'Fake' claims, Johnny Winter - blood, drugs and resurrection. The Electric Ned Kelly Show. 70's guide to soul and punk. Sherbet, Dead Boys, Midnight Oil, Krishna Frolics, Aerosmith, Stars

RAM No. 80
The First Australian Groupies Report (Pt. 2). The man who was zapped by Bob Dylan. Frank Zappa - no future? George Benson 'n all that jazz. Rock movies; Keef 'n' drugs; Boz Scagga; Radio Birdman; Mondo Rock; Ramones; Jackson Browne; Monkees; Phil Manzanera.



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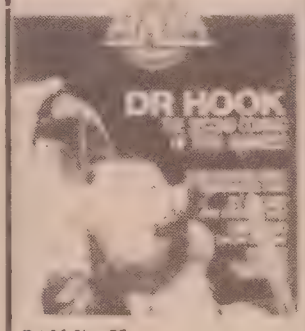
Dragon - real weird tales from the strangest band in the land. Graham Parker - madness on the phone to Oz. Mexico. Skyhooks - new elpee; Johnny O'Keefe - the first and future King; Billy Joel - Pre-tour delights.

RAM No. 82
David Bowie - Rock hero turns movie gigolo; Bob Marley; Queen - they are the champions; Foreigner - first Oz tour; Split Enz - in the U.K.; Beach Boys - drunken revels; Skyhooks, N.Z. Rock; Blondie; Scandal; Nuclear War; Air Supply; K.B.E.; Nick Lowe; Jo Jo Zep.

RAM No. 83
Little River Band; Bob Dylan - concert chaos; Bryan Ferry - prisoner in; Eric Clapton - reluctant hero; Rush - right wing rock B.B. King - blues are forever; The Babys; Kansas; Jeff St. John, T.M.G.; Red Hot Peppers; Paul McCartney; Sweet; Elvis Costello.

RAM No. 84
Paul McCartney, Leo Sayer - wild on the streets; Tom Robinson Band - rising free; The Angels - hello Haloes; Blondie - the sexist pig show; Brian Eno - Bowie cohort speaks; Little River Band - new elpee; Foreigner; Kate Bush; Cheap Trick; New Zealand after dark; Dave Warner; Space Loonies; Sweet.



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Dr. Hook - the second coming of total madness; Joan Armatrading - the definitive story. Ry Cooder - 'W'Ry eccentric in Oz; Status Quo - rockin' Germans; Genesis - the American apocalypse; Bob Seger; Bowie; Warren Zevon; Rick Formosa; Radio Birdman; Bob Marley; Patti Smith; Eddie Riff.

RAM No. 86
Jethro Tull - Popularity Crisis? Elvis Costello - this year's interview; Sandy Denny R.I.P.; Win with Sports! Introducing Eddie Riff; New Rockcomic; Bee Gees disown Australia; Space Movies; Sat. Night Fever; Manning; James Brown; Ray Burton; Jo Jo Zep; Sweet Jayne; Uriah Heep; Lou Reed; Saints.

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J.P.Y.; L.R.B.; AC/DC; New Stones/Springsteen Elpees; Graham Parker - small men in dark glasses rool; Split Enz - startling changes; T.V.; Alice Cooper; Black Sabbath Bloodbath; Matchbox; Joe Walsh; Stiletto; Madder Lake; Tom Waits; Elks; Supernaut; The Band.

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Thin Lizzy - the new face of hard rock; Jefferson Starship - old hippies bow out? Bob Dylan - new York; Van Halen - happiness is a big P.A.; George Thorogood - happiness is the blooze; Whale's last stand; U.F.O.; E.L.O.; Russell Morris; Hot Chocolate; 60's rock returns.

RAM No. 91
Free record from Angels; Peter Gabriel - the bald truth; Frank Zappa - from genius dirty old man; Silverscreen special - The Last Waltz (Robbie Robertson), Newsfront, Wednesday; Sex Pistols; Tom Petty; Jethro Tull; Robyn Archer; Elvis Costello; N.Z. Bands; Anne Kirkpatrick; J.P.Y.; Radio War

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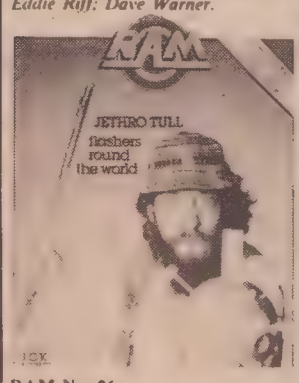
Dragon; Sherbet; Bruce Springsteen - fights the past; Dave Gilmour - the heart of Pink Floyd; Alan Parsons - pyramid power; Johnny Cougar - the kid's alright. Silverscreen - Grease, Sgt. Peppers, Hot Wax

RAM No. 93
Graham Parker - talks about Oz tour; Pete Townshend and his generation; Joe Walsh - the human face of the Eagles, Pinball - Black Jack vs the mere mortal, Tom Waits; Ross Wilson; Sports; Stiletto; Sherbet; Skyhooks; Peter Cook and Dudley Moore; Darryl Cotton

RAM No. 94
Special P.A. Supplement; On the eve of his drug trial Keith Richard talks; Farewell Keith Moon - a retrospective; Runaways - flat busted in '78; War of the Worlds - disco from outer space; The Death of Punk - rot in pieces; Leo de Castro, Jon English; Sex Pistols; Etta James, Midnight Oil; David Johansen; Otway & Barrett; High Rise Bombers; Rock Movies.

RAM No. 95
David Bowie - looking back on the Thin White Duke; Kiss - wet and sloppy; Ronnie Biggs - phones from Brazil; Bette Midler - blessed with brains, talent and gorgeous tits; Abba; Jo Jo Zep; Russell Morris; Grateful Dead; Blondie; Eddie Riff; Dave Warner.



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Jethro Tull - flashers round the world; J.O'K - a tribute; Bryan Ferry - better but bitter; Little River Band - reconquering Australia; Bette Midler - what she does on stage; Photo Contest; Thin Lizzy; 10CC; Patti Smith; Juke Boxes; Yes; Linda Ronstadt.

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Bowie the Orew; Frampton - Road Te..a; The Who - 1st Interview; Springsteen - myth maker; Elton ... Frank Zappa; Dire Strai... 55; Saints - go to hell; Neil Young.

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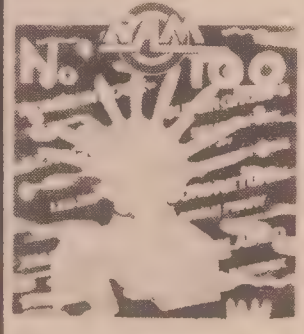

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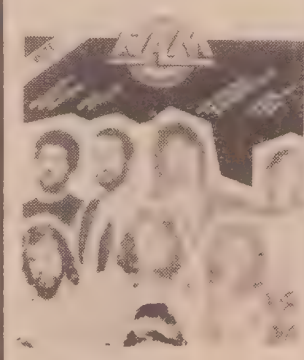
116 pages. Films,. New Wave, Worst RAM letters; The Who; Elton John; Supergroups; Oz Rock; Drug Report; Women In Rock; Bryan Ferry; Reggae; Rock Quiz; RAM Songbook; Jim Morrison; Phew! And also Dave Warner; Linda Ronstadt; Rod Stewart; Skyhooks; Bowie; LRB; Stones; Sports; JPY; Jon English.



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Eric Clapton - Guitar God Unrecognised; Sports - All fine in '79; Elvis Costello - the Oz rampage New elpee exclusive, The Cars; Chicago - new life for Old Hippies?; Superman, The Fury, Doobie Bros, Todd Rundgren, Uriah Heep, The Clash, Hells Angels, Burning Spear.

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Rod Stewart - Just how sexy?; Split Enz Return!; Peter Tosh; Young Modern; Mike Oldfield; Dingoes Demise; Uriah Heep; Black Sabbath; Frankie Miller; The Dots; Lou Reed; Smokie; Chicago; Lynne Hamilton.

RAM No. 103
78/79 is the year of The Angels; Kevin Borich; Rolling Stones - Keith Richards Exclusive; Al Stewart; Midnight Oil; Rose Tattoo; Stars; Stranglers; Lindisfarne; Supernaut; Dylan Bootleg; Genya Ravan; Tiny Tim.

RAM No. 104
Catching the Street-smouts with Cold Chisel; The Stranglers - new wave UK rock tours Oz; Sid Vicious; Elvis Costello; Rod Stewart in concert; Dire Straits interview; The Doors; U.F.O.'s; AC/DC; Bee Gees; Sports/Split Enz new elpees; Who is Kim Fowley.

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Van Morrison - exclusive interview; Dragon split, Marc Hunter's last stand; Linda Ronstadt; Devo; Rock Comedy - Monty Python, Steve Martin, Cheech & Chong; New Skyhooks in concert; Rod Stewart fake; Stranglers in Oz; Dr Who; Films; Mi-Sex.

RAM No. 106
Led Zeppelin - new album; Roxy Music; New Dragon; The Clash; Village People; Doug Parkinson; Max Merritt; Bowie; Jefferson Starship; The Aliens; Sex Pistols in court.

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Australian Tour Exclusive; Bob Marley in Jamaica; Roxy Music return in triumph; Sherbet; Bad Company; Marijuana Decriminalisation Movement; Rodriguez; Renee Geyer & Kevin Borich join forces; Iggy Pop; Razar; Toto; Romantics; Maria Muldaur; Stockley, See & Mason; Air Supply; Babys.

RAM No. 108
Blondie - face of marble, heart of glass; Angels - studio exclusive; Ian Dury; Graham Parker; Fawlty Towers Pt. 2; In defence of the doley; Tom Waits; The Reels; Sex Pistols; Bob Seger; Beach Boys; Bryan Ferry; Barry Mann; Radiators; Babys; John Cleese.

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The 20th Century Dracula Obsession; Bob Marley; Joe Cocker; Marc Hunter; Cheap Trick; Boomtown Rats; U.F.O.; Vietnam Movies; Richard Clapton; Reels; Bob Welch; Skyhooks; Gang warfare in the U.S.A.; Contraband; Dots.

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Dave Warner; Lou Reed bops Bowie; Lene Lovich; Magnificent Torment Sports The English Report Card; Sci-Fi movies; Overkill; Black Sabbath; Interview; Richard Clapton; Eric Gradman's Man & Machine; Gang Flicks; Mark Gillespie; Rod Stewart; Ian Dury; XL Capris.

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David Bowie - new 'Lodger' album exclusive; Cold Chisel - tasting success; Thin Lizzy; Talking Heads; Rock Radio - the RAM Report; Ibanez Guitars reviewed; Ol '55; Matchbox; Max Merritt; Bob Dylan; Dragon; Asian Rock; X; Jo Jo Zep.

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The Do It Yourself Ian Dury review; The Angels; Sports; The Babys; The Sydney explosion - 20 new bands head for the top; Rock on TV; Gerry Rafferty; Larry Norman; Led Zep; Lene Lovich; Tubes; Dragon; Sparks; X-Ray Spex; Bee Gees.

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Mad Max - the Mel Gibson interview; Dire Straits; John McLaughlin; Midnight Oil; Melbourne bands; Oz radio; Talking Heads; Pop Muzik; Rickie Lee Jones; Bowie; Hello Sailor; Crossfire; Abba; Donna Summer; Movies; Books.

RAM No. 114
The Angels - the new centurians of rock'n'roll; Bryan Ferry; XTC; Keef Richards & Ron Wood - the New Barbarians; Dolly Parton; Flowers; Robert Palmer; Elvis Costello; Jimmy & The Boys; Australian Crawl; Pere Ubu; U.K. Devo; Patti Smith.

RAM No. 115
Cold Chisel - the fire that burns within; Silver Screen special; Brian Jones; Iggy Pop; Jo Jo Zep; Mental As Anything; Dr Feelgood; Lou Reed; Kiss; Joni Mitchell; Cars; Nick Lowe; Dave Edmunds; Peter Frampton.

RAM No. 116
Supertramp - schizophrenia in heaven; Kevin Borich; Nick Lowe & Dave Edmunds; Stars; Lowell George; Jon English; Mi-Sex; The Cars; Rex Smith; Films;
Films; Fleetwood Mac; Loaded Dice; Velvet Underground; Swanee; Movies.

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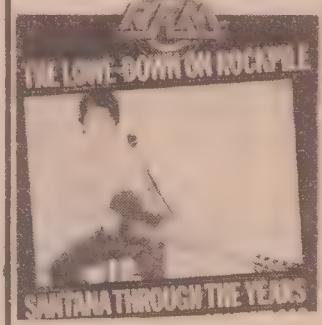
Jimmy Page - comes in thrugh the out door; Led Zeppelin - reviewed live in Copenhagen; XTC - fall in love in Oz; Comrades of War - Radio Birdman's last stand; Thin Lizzy; Chuck Berry; Cars; Numbers; Bushwackers; Siouxsie & The Banshees; Smokie.

RAM No. 118
Bob Dylan Exclusive new album preview; Led Zeppelin; Ian Dury; The Knack; Joe Jackson; Richard Clapton; Jerry Lee Lewis; The China Syndrome; LRB; Aliens; Street Talk; Mondo Rock.

RAM No. 119
Joan Armatrading - penetrating the privacy; Ry Cooder; AC/DC; The B-52's; Harry Chapin, The Hitmen; Russell Morris; Midnight Oil; Jerry Lee Lewis; Bushwackers; LRB; Mi-Sex; Dugites; Voyager; Creedence Clearwater Revival.



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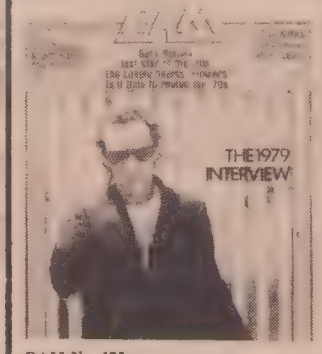
The Lowe-Down on Rockpile; Santana through the years; the new adventures of Meatloaf; Radiators; Mi-Sex; Is there life after being Big in Oz Rock?; Van Morrison; Bob Dylan; Paul Kelly; The Reels; Whittle Family; Tactics; Western Flyer; Motels.

RAM No. 121
Cheap Trick - Sheer Magnificence; The Who - The Kids Are Alright; Swanee; Ry Cooder; Tom Verlaine; The Stranglers; Hello Sailor; The Bishops; Eddie Money; Kevin Coyne; Randy Newman; Lipstick Killers; Van Morrison; La Femme; The Jam.

RAM No. 122
Jon English - from Superstar back to rock roots; Blondie vs American Morality; The Boomtown Rats; Rockpile in Oz; Elton John thru the ages; Bruce Springsteen; Mondo Rock; Monty Python; Patti Smith.



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Graham Parker - the 1979 interview; Status Quo; Stevie Wonder; AC/DC; Doc Neeson & Jim Barnes - the summit talk; Gary Numan; The Lonely Hearts; Flowers; Is it time to revive the '70s; Dave Warner; Ray Arnott; Models; Sneakers; The Heaters; Kinks.

RAM No. 124
Jo Jo Zep - at last the year of the Falcon; Mental As Anything; The Police; Mar Hunter interview; Monty Python's - Life Of Brian; Alien; The Members in Oz; Loaded Dice; Boomtown Rats; Little Feat; Th' Dudes; Manikins; Marc Bolan; Boston.

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boomtown rat hunting

by Greg Taylor

Nose twitching, the rat with inky paws scurried through the corridors of Sydney's Sebel Town House. Hungry for a story, scavenging gobbets of conversation and left-over atmospheres, ready to tear strips off a concert... no matter that those he preyed on were BOOMTOWN RATS. Rats are cannibals.

the bare bones

Mid '75 five Dublin boys decided to relieve the boredom of doing nothing much by forming a band. They ask a friend to manage them - within a week he asks to become the singer. His name is Bob Geldof. Like a million bands, their roots are in sixties pop and r'n'b, but they also have a strong affection for country music, (a taste now mainly indulged at sound checks).

A year later the band signs to Phonogram and moves to London; hits in '77 with *Lookin' After No. One* and *Mary of the Fourth Form.* Album *The Boomtown Rats* receives much critical acclaim.

In '78 a great second album, *A Tonic for the Troops*, more hits - *She's So Modern, Like Clockwork* and a No. 1 with *Rat Trap.* Originally branded as 'new wave', the Rats are right in there on the first crest though the Pistols get more publicity. However Mr Geldof proves to be just about as quotable as Mr Rotten, and the English music papers are definitely sweet on the Rats right up until...

they have a huge hit with *I Don't Like Mondays* in mid '79, which brings them to a wide pop audience outside the UK. *The Fine Art of Surfacing* also sells very well: the honeymoon with the press is over, and the inevitable accusations of 'pop starring' start, mostly aimed personally at Geldof, whose habit of fast one-liners furnishes many a snappy headline.

scraps overheard in a joint interview

Peeking from under the sofa, the rat saw a tousled gangly man spooning biscuits out of his cup of tea, flanked by two Melbourne radio people who looked at their notes and called him 'Bob'. Creeping nearer, he heard...

"... if people pay you the compliment of liking your music, and supporting you, then it's your *duty* to go and play to them regardless of distance, and it's your obligation to do the best you can and bring whatever you can, regardless of cost. I'd say the band will lose about £50,000 coming to tour Australia.

I think the world tour will cost us about £200,000 - which we don't have. In the long run we've got to pay back fifty per cent of that to the record company, who've advanced us the touring money against future sales. But what the fook? - I'd never have seen Australia otherwise."

Mundane matters. But how to communicate the delicious gentle Irish brogue (interspersed with deadly mimicry of fat-cat American A&R men, Oxbridge commentators, and anyone else whose accent and sentiments proclaim him an arsehole). Barmy 'bout the blarney - the rat was charmed...

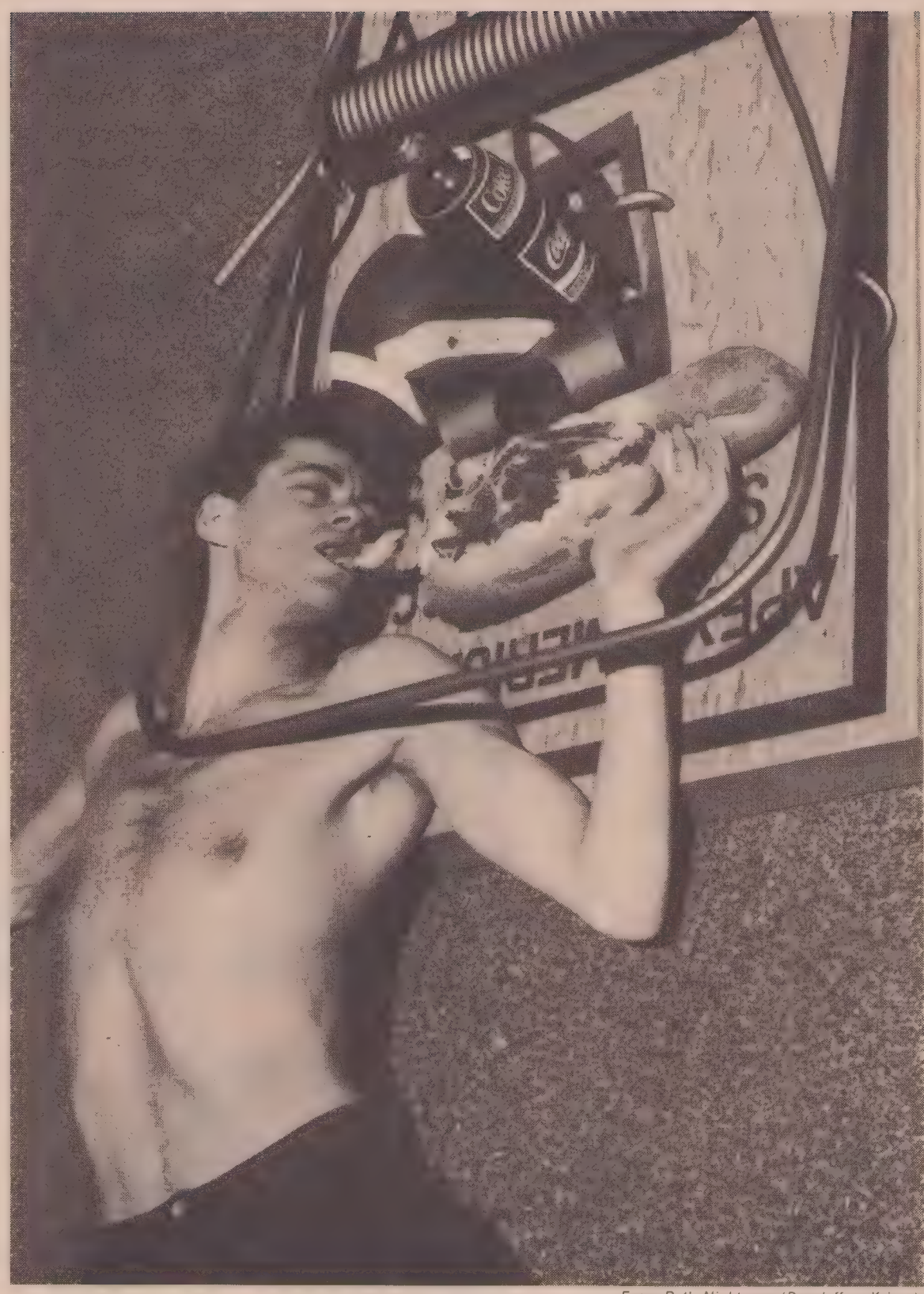
"... The context to put the beginning of the Rats is the context of all the bands that were beginning then. The Saints started in Australia, the Rats in Ireland, the Pistols in England, the Ramones in America... and we all started within two weeks of each other. Nobody had heard of anybody else, but you know that expression 'There's nothing as strong as an idea whose time has come'? The time had come for something new... and a good idea always strikes the collective consciousness at the same time.

"To give you an example: we were thinking of recording a couple of Stax songs last year. And the next minute, *everybody's* recording Stax songs - so y' have to back off.

"So we were just an Irish branch of what was happening elsewhere.

"It was no big deal. We were fed up to here with what was happening with radio, fed up to here with the music that was coming out that meant nothing. But it was no crusade we were on; we had nothing better to do than to be in a band, it was as simple as that. We were a coupla mates who had a couple of acoustic guitars - you don't know anything's going to happen - even when it does happen you're not sure that it's happened.

"There was nothing in Ireland: there were no gigs, there was no rock papers, there was no rock radio or rock TV. By the time we left there were five new bands, there was ten rock gigs in Dublin alone, there was five pirate stations, there was one thriving music



Every Rat's Nightmare (Pic: Jeffrey Kriger)

Every Front Row Photographer's Dream (Pic: Ross Barnett)

paper. Then, coming back two months ago, there was three rock papers, ten pirate radio stations in Dublin, one official government rock station, a TV channel that piped rock music from Britain... I'm not saying we did that, but we certainly created the atmosphere in which it could happen; and if nothing else, we're quite proud of that.

"I send things back to the pirates, always. If I'm in Australia, I'll send back Mi-Sex and the Angels; if I meet somebody like David Bowie, I'll slip on me little tape recorder and ask them do they mind? - just send it back, so they have something to play."

ratifications

Aha! thought the rat, tapping his snout knowledgably, of course... *Geldof used to be a rock journalist.* That's why he's got good taste, global consciousness, and a way with words. Ask him a vague question about the cyclical nature of popular music; he'll know the area you're trying to nudge him into, he'll repay nervous waffle with a generous helping of sparkling pith.

"Yes, I think it is cyclical. Like, say in '75 or '76, the initial burst becomes vaguely irrelevant as the age group that spawned it grows older. It's like ten people in a room: if they want to hear a certain type of music, and they can't, then four of them will start a band - the other six are definitely going to listen.

"So you had the new bands grabbing rock and roll by the scruff of its neck and shoving it up the arse of the Top Twenty... which eventually succumbed, to the point where it now contains some relevant singles...

"The first onslaught was definitely the Pistols. They were necessary because they rejected, completely and utterly, everything... they were the sore in the face of the record companies; the pimple burst and they dribbled down the companies' chin. And you needed that beautiful rejection - we wouldn't have had the courage, nor would we have even understood it, because we're good middleclass boys."

love ratios

The phone rings; in the lurch of movement towards it, the rat realised the dimly lit room festooned with clothes and complimentary champagne is full of lurking journalists, managers and promo men, all of whom studiously pretend not to listen as Bob takes the call from his girlfriend Paula in London.

"Hi luv... there's about four or five journalists here so I can't tell you I love you or I'll blow my cool... What time is it?... Um... yeah... Uh, good... is it dead? Well now's yer chance to kill it... Who poisoned it?... Well, take it to the vet... I had food poisoning as well, in Japan; maybe the cat was sick in sympathy... fookin' raw fish... Didja get the mirror up?... DID WE?... What for?... Fine, look, I'll ring tomorrer from New Zealand, same time... Do I luv yer? Is the Pope Polish?... Bye."

"She told me I've just won two Ivor Novello Awards."

rational choice cuts

Appetite whetted, the rat hopped onto the table: he was dying to quiz the ex-rock journo about his treatment by the media. Geldof sighed - his chances of a rest before the gig were vanishing rapidly - and poured some champagne in a saucer.

Does the media seem to understand the Boomtown Rats? Where do you get your dumbest stories?

"The national dailies are the worst... and the American press seems to have no conception at all. Even the record company there didn't know what we were. Up until last year they thought that we were the Monkees incarnate; but then fortunately the Knack came along and took over our position.

"So then they thought 'Hey, they're intellectual heavyweights', because of *I Don't Like Mondays*, and we became *Time* and *Newsweek* fodder, which was equally ridiculous.

"In America, if you're rude to people they think you're clever... we broke our arses being nice to people - not being *nice*, just being normal. But I gave it up, 'cause I suddenly saw that Elvis Costello and the Clash were getting more airplay 'cause they were being obnoxious. So we tried being Rock Stars for a while, and it seemed to work."

Dry and droll, but juicy underneath - just how the rat likes it! The rat remembered seeing some fairly snide references to Bob in the English music press recently; has he ever considered suing someone to silence the malice?

"Yeah, I was goin' to sue *Sounds* or *NME* recently. It's got to the point where I can't go somewhere with my girlfriend and not be insulted. Y' wanna cry actually, 'cause it's *so* barbed and *so* personal and so intense - y'know, week after week. And worse still it hurts her, which really annoys me.

"She's very pretty and she's very intelligent and she's very funny, so obviously I prefer to spend more time with her than other people, so we go out places: and I'm not goin' to be intimidated by fame into meeting in some clandestine fashion. So we get GELDOF SEEN OUT WITH THAT BLONDE TART AGAIN, or WHO DO THEY THINK THEY ARE, BRITT AND ROD?

"And the worst of it is, it's not Britt and Rod, it's not Mick and Bianca - it's not even Mick and Marrianne, y'know.

"The honeymoon with the press ended just prior to *Mondays*. Why it ends is that after a certain point you're sort of out of reach - they can't necessarily touch you, can't effect you: so they become impotent. The impotent usually scream the most shrilly."

Every One's A Geldof (Pix: Gary Fletcher)

Bob trying to rave about Oz bands (Pic: Moss)

Simon, Steve, Bob, Johnny, Gary at the drive-in.

So what, wondered the rat, would be **The Geldof Instructions To Rock Journos?**

"Couldn't give you any...umm ... well... Never to lose the sense of fun and naivity that exists in rock'n'roll, and that most bands manage to have... and don't become jaded and irrelevant. Don't lose the original motivation for becoming a rock journalist, which is the love of music. If you're getting jaded from too many gigs - back off, or you'll just be an old hack."

Privately, the rat regarded this to be about as helpful as a doctor saying "Eat plenty of greens and get lots of exercise." Time for another tack.

What impression do you have of Australian music?

"Well... of late I think it's improved a million times. There seems to be a huge awakening in art here in terms of movies and rock'n'roll.

"The only Australian band who've done anything in England is AC/DC... Split Enz have a *vague* presence. Sports is quite a good pop band, I think Mi-Sex is quite a good band. I saw a clip of The Angels, I thought they were a good band... Chilled? No, *Cold Chisel*, they sound good...

But they're such terrible names. They've got to get that together."

ratings

The rat bared his fangs politely, while reflecting that The Angels/Angel City have got it together enough to make a bigger impression on the American charts first time in than the Rats ever have, despite a "terrible" name...

Do you ever find yourself at a loss for words or ideas?

"For words - no, very rarely, which is a fault, I suppose. There's never any confusion in my mind about what I'm thinking. I'm very dogmatic, and I see things in terms of black and white, which people mistake as arrogance."

Does that ever lead to remorse?

"No, not remorse, but I've got an immense capacity for revenge... I may regret having said something to certain people, but I believe what I said. I regret how it may turn out in print, because it's been misquoted or paraphrased and makes me look like an idiot.

"And that I'm not."

Indeed no. Most people look like idiots if they're *not* paraphrased in print: in conversation even practised interviewees rely on expression and gesture to transcend their muddy syntax. I could print Geldof straight, thought the rat.

"The habit of one-liners," says Geldof, rubbing his stubble, "of summing up what I'm thinking in one sentence, comes from debating at school. Plus, if you ever go to a Geldof family argument you'll see two sisters and a father, roaring one-liners at each other. No healthy arguments - it's just trying to outsmart each other." He brooks. "I don't really get on with them that well..."

Yet you're marked with the same stripe - the rat was partial to a delicate inference. But time was running out, the support band would already be on stage, no leisure for wide-ranging discussion, got to go for the guts...

Searching through all your songs, I find none of them talking to anyone in a loving way...

"That's right, and it's perceptive of yer..." *(the rat twirls his whiskers and tries to look sagacious).* "I've noticed it, but I've never said anything about it to anyone.

"I think maybe it's because a lot of the songs are written at four or five in the morning - I stay up and get very depressed. With *Wind Chill Factor (from The Fine Art of Surfacing)*, I intentionally started off to write a love song: and it came out as this very bleak and bitter thing... I can't quite understand why, 'cause I have quite a capacity for love, even though I don't believe it's a permanent emotion. I can feel it for seconds, minutes, hours, days, years: but I do believe it's transient.

"In the second album, if something got too close to the bone, I put in something funny, and glossed over it. I wanted to avoid that on the third LP - I tried to be more honest, and *Wind Chill Factor* got the closest to it, I think.

"But most of the songs are about other people.

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"On the other hand, Tuesdays are groovy..." (Pic: Moss)

They're observations. And that perhaps is a result of my journalistic thing," staring pointedly at the rat - "The ultimate cop out by the cowardly, who observe but never participate."

Cut to the quick, the rat fights back the tears, and presses the attack.

But even in the observations, there's no element of tenderness. Do you think the world is so bleak?

"I do, yeah. But I also think there's an element of optimism in most of the songs... The fine art of surfacing - songs about people who are going down but also coming up... I think people, including myself, are fairly dispicable."

In 'Don't Believe What You Read', from 'Tonic For the Troops', you say 'It's just when you tell me you love me/I have to see your eyes.' Are you suspicious of your lovers?

"Yeah, definitely. It's so easy to *write*, 'I love you'."

You don't think people can lie when they look you in the eye?

"They do: but I know."

rataplans

Belatedly the rat realises that nothing has been said about the five other Rats. Geldof agrees: "It's a pity - 'cos they're equally intelligent, equally valuable... equally boring."

Why do you dominate the writing. Is it because the rest of the band don't have things to say, or because the things you say are better?

"They don't like lyrics very much. But it's just the same way that they will extend or substitute ideas in the music. I play guitar very badly and harp even worse. To be quite honest wid yer, communicating the songs to them is a hideously embarrassing experience."

But they don't get any royalties if their name's not on the song, do they?

"I don't get all the publishing. It's split between the band."

The rat is astounded. *That's very commendable.*

"It's not commendable - there'd be a fookin' war if we didn't!"

And there'll be rumbles in the aisles if the Rats are late. Geldof grabs his hat, poses patiently for one last picture, and departs.

concert gleanings

At last, the rest of the Rats! Gary Roberts with a tough guy kiss curl, his co-guitarist Jerry Cott, looking like a sawn-off Ray Davies, bass player Pete Briquette, small and frisky as a puppy, keyboardist and celebrated pyjama wearer Johnny Fingers, and drummer Simon Crowe. The night before's gig had been plagued by indifferent sound; improvements had apparently been made, but the rat would have liked a more distinct guitar sound. Geldof had said earlier, "I never make a big thing about the words being understandable - I *hate* the way the record company always wants the vocals way up front, I'm always saying *'Pull it back, pull it back'."* The record company definitely aren't doing the mix this night.

Most of the *Fine Art of Surfacing* was played, about half of *Tonic*, and a few from *The Boomtown Rats*, notably *Joey* and *Mary Of The Fourth Form*. Some of the best moments occurred when "Our special guest, all the way from Ireland - on sax, Doctor Keith!" (at least that's what it sounded like to the rat). And Geldof's old school friend, David McHale, appeared, resplendent in purple suit. His excellent sound lifted the whole band in several numbers, especially a great version of *Rat Trap*.

Geldof, in baggy black-and-white check jacket and powder blue boater, a caricature of an Irish race track tout, wondered the rat), worked the boisterous audience with easy authority. When someone yelled "Ya fairy!" in the middle of his chat, he immediately had a spotlight turned on the heckler and asked sweetly, *"Have yer got a big enough cock to satisfy me, then?"* The rest of the band wandered casually to and fro on the deep stage (with the exception of Briquette, the most running-and-posturing bass player the rat could remember since Jethro Tull's tour); Geldof shambled and danced with knock-kneed abandon. Doc Neeson with rickets.

It was a good show, if not a great one. The Rats play alright - there were some haunting moments when Geldof payed his respects to Van Morrison, some fair rages, and *Mondays* remains a consummate pop song.. But the rat's enjoyment of the three albums included the thoughtful irony of the lyrics, and these often didn't come across.

No matter. The Rats may continue to delight from afar: if it is the video age we're moving into, they have shown themselves to be imaginative and confident practitioners. Why go to hear a band when all you wanna do is glance?

ratels-nothing left but room service

In the lobby the groupies come and go...
Talking of Bob Geldo...

The rat felt greedy, skulking round the Town House after the show in the hope of some more snippets. All the rodents were jockeying for position in the hotel foyer waiting for the band: when they came in, in a flurry of towels, kitbags and Irish catcalls, the rat was almost trampled in the rush.

Geldof kindly invited him up. Once again they sat in the darkened room while others huddled in corners; again the rat tried to match Geldof's desire for discussion rather than question and answer. Interesting rambles - even when he's real tired, the marvellous sing-song voice and the brain behind it keep on rolling - but nothing you could get your teeth into.

"If I leave the stage and I feel alright, then I know it wasn't a good show; but if I have to rest for five minutes then it's a good gig - for me. I feel the audience must leave the hall as drained and as exhausted and as happy as I do, or else I've failed.

"Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't."

Hope you're tired and happy, said the rat.

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'CRUISING'

WILD IN THE STREETS

Talent Quest

Mick Farren reviews the streets of New York that made William Friedkin's upcoming film 'Cruising' possible. A tale of violence and S&M Gay Bars.

The same week the movie *Cruising* was premiered in midtown Manhattan, a 15-year-old kid was trying to sneak onto a subway train without paying, just a few blocks away at the Columbus Circle subway station. Unfortunately he was caught by a Transit cop and found himself being frogmarched out of the station. Legally there's some sort of fine for dodging the fare on the subway, but in practice all that happens is that you get your ass kicked out of the station and, for the next few days, it's usually a good idea to get on the subway someplace else.

Not in this kid's case, though. He decides which way he's going to come and it ain't going to be with his hands on his head. He makes a grab for the cop's gun. The cop is a little slow. He's obviously not expecting such a massive reaction on a 50c subway fare dodge. The kid jerks the gun out of the cop's holster and pumps five bullets into him. The cop is dead and the kid is running. He doesn't even make it out of the station. Another cop has heard the shots and grabs him. The cuffs are on and he's got the kid in custody and the dead cop's empty gun as evidence. Not only has the kid killed a police officer, he has just done an admirable job of scrambling his own future.

Down at the station, the kid refuses to give his name. He is John Doe (Hispanic). Later, in court, he tells the judge that he is from another galaxy. The cops claim that he is no stranger to angel dust.

Could this be violence as a means of self-expression?

During the premier of *Cruising* and for some days afterwards, the National Theatre - on Broadway at Times Square - was picketed by militant gays who objected to the way in which a series of gay murders were depicted in the film and who feared that they might spark off yet another round of anti-gay violence. Only a few weeks before, a gang of juvenile studs from the Bronx had erupted out of the West 4th Street subway station and gone on a "get the queers" rampage through Greenwich Village.

Not being too sophisticated in Village ways, these baby hoodlums had attacked anyone gay or straight who didn't actually resemble John Wayne or Muhammad Ali. The obvious gay activist fear was that *Cruising* might cause such attacks to escalate.

The picketing of the National Theatre was not the first organised gay protest against *Cruising*. Back in the humid, overheated days of the summer, there had been a near-riot while filming had been taking place on New York's notorious Christopher Street, a three-block strip in the heart of the Village where the guys in the Village People outfits really mean it.

Before the movie had even been completed, the gay community had decided that any movie about a gay sex killer, particularly if it was being made by the same man who directed *The Exorcist*, could do nothing to improve the homosexual image and would probably bode badly for gays in general.

Was this the fear of violence as a means of self-expression?

At root, *Cruising* is nothing more than a murder mystery. Sure, it's a particularly gruesome Jack the Ripper tale, based on a series of real murders that took place in New York between 1973 and 1979. In these cases, the victims, apparently all homosexual males, were dismembered, wrapped in black plastic garbage bags and dumped in the section of the Hudson River that flows past the western boundary of Greenwich Village.

At the time, the police were sufficiently baffled that they sent undercover cops into the so-called "homosexual underground" in the hope of flushing out the gay ripper.

So why the protests? There have been mass murder movies before. The list would go on for pages. More often than not the victims are heterosexual women. From *Psycho* to *Klute* to *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, the theme has been the same and nobody has bothered to raise that much of a fuss.

What has both the gays and the censorship lobby in an uproar is the fact that *Cruising* is set in a particularly dark and extreme sub-world inside the gay community. The *Cruising* press release tactfully describes it thus: "The backgrounds for the actual slayings and for the film are the S&M heavy-leather bars and sex clubs clustered along the waterfront of the West Village and the Central Park cruising area known as the Rambles. Characterised by intense and often violent sexuality, this is a world that exists far from the mainstream of gay life, experienced by only a few homosexuals and by almost none of the straight community."

This is almost certainly violence as a means of self-expression.

The old West Side Highway is a derelict overpass that runs down the west side of Manhattan along the Hudson River waterfront. It no longer carries traffic, it is so dangerous. In recent years large chunks of concrete have dropped off it. It has decayed and corroded, neglected by a close-to-bankrupt city until it cannot be repaired. Its decorative cast iron is almost eaten away by rust while City Hall wonders how it is going to pay for having it torn down.

Under the shadow of this highway, from 14th Street going south, where the end of the Village stops at the dirty river water is the strip where *Cruising* is set. This is the strip where bars like The Meat Rack, The Anvil and The Toilet prosper and flourish.

Once upon a time this was real waterfront. The bars had different names and were patronised by longshoremen and merchant sailors. Now the docks are empty and all that's left are vacant warehouses and the dead, elevated highway. In a city as crowded as New York, though, nothing remains deserted very long. The twilight blocks became the turf of the hardcore of the S&M leather freaks.

To the unsuspecting, a walk down there is like a visit to an alien planet. The posers and hustlers are dehumanised in creaking leather, gleaming studs and inscrutable mirrored aviator glasses. Few walk there by accident. This strip goes from nowhere to nowhere and most of those who wander there from choice are seeking experiences best left to the imagination. (A pair of body builders disguised as big players in *The Wild One* inflicting sexual injury on each other assumes such Godzilla proportions that it's best not to dwell upon it.)

It is violence as the total means of expression.

This is the subworld in which Al Pacino is forced to immerse himself as the cop tracking down the psychopathic killer in *Cruising*. Coupled with the straightforward plot of the hetero cop doing undercover work in the world of the terminally bizarre, the film is the study of the increasing psychological pressures on him as he moves in this leather bar milieu.

The Pacino character begins to experience severe doubts about his own sexuality. The film is disturbingly oblique about whether or not Steve Burns (Pacino's detective) fully participates in violent homosexual acts to maintain his cover. It is equally oblique about closet homosexuality inside the police department and whether, at the end of the movie, Burns himself has turned into a psychotic, sadistic killer.

Maybe, in the hands of some other director, a movie of this type, a murder mystery set in a sexual edge-city, might have been made into something worthwhile. Unfortunately this movie was in the hands of William Friedkin, the man who made *The French Connection* and *The Exorcist*, and all he seems to have succeeded in doing is coming out with what *The New Yorker* calls "A slovenly, bruising sort of movie, whose persistent uncertainties of tone and meaning only confirm the fears that it was made mostly to shock and sell."

The French Connection was a fast, robust story and William Friedkin is a fast, robust storyteller. But some people were disturbed by *The Exorcist*. Some had bad dreams, others threw up. A tiny minority reeled away from the film and murdered their relatives or set fire to their children in the belief that they were casting out devils.

This was violence as self-expression when all other means have failed.

The Exorcist had a lasting and, for some, very negative effect. There were deaths and there were cases of psychosis apparently triggered by the film. Friedkin could have been excused from any responsibility for these incidents if he had simply been making a film on the subject of demonic possession.

Unfortunately Friedkin was not playing it straight. A quiet controversy still goes on over whether he was using subliminals in *The Exorcist*, fast flash visuals and sub-audible sounds that profoundly disturbed the audience even before the plot or the action on the screen had made its impact.

Needless to say, the gay community was hardly thrilled when they heard that Friedkin was working on a picture set in and about one of the most sensitive and least attractive fringes of their world.

To a great extent, the gays' fears were well founded. *Cruising* hardly presents anything close to a sympathetic or even balanced picture. There is only one homosexual character who is not a bizarre macho man or screaming queen. It makes homosexuality appear a contagious and brutal disease to which nobody, including Al Pacino, is immune. Despite all protestations to the contrary on the part of the makers, the only message that comes out of the picture is that, if you hang around with homosexuals or the leather set long enough, you either end up being a killer or a victim.

Suddenly it seems to be just another case of violence as a means of commercial exploitation.

Not even all the gays seemed to be able to agree, though. Some of the leather set, although not supporting *Cruising*, seemed to object to the rest of the gay world treating them as some sort of shameful underbelly that had to be kept hidden from the straights.

Wall posters appeared all over New York, declaring, along with suitable graphics, that **"the difference between S&M and torture is consent."**

We seemed to be back with violence as a means of self-expression just so long as it's between consenting adults.

Cruising For A Bruising

"Dirk Bogarde's Chin and Mankind's Forehead - Must Be J.J. Cale!" (Pic: David Hill/AFI)

WELCOME TO CALE COUNTRY

The J.J. Cale Interview

by Philippe Garnier

John Jacques Cale is a rock'n'roll enigma. His distinctive, casual drawl and his delicate country blues style are so recognisable that they've become a trademark, albeit one which more commercially conscious musicians such as Dire Straits and Eric Clapton have imitated and exploited. In keeping with Cale's desire to remain a private person who talks through his art, few rock writers have managed to interview him at any reasonable length or depth. Philippe Garnier achieved the near impossible when he spoke to Cale at his Nashville home. This article traces the man's career from his beginnings as a hopeful barfly in Los Angeles through the five solo albums he has recorded.

Nashville is not the city that music built. Insurance and bible selling made this town. Money is its main feature, visible in all the streets where money-lenders of any form advertise with that crude self-righteousness peculiar to Protestant towns.

It's everywhere with the banks and insurance companies, an incredible array of pawnshops and legit money-sharks claiming proudly that "Only one signature is required!" And if you wonder why most of the music coming out of this town lacks balls nowadays, just look up: they're all there, hanging in threes above shop windows.

That's the crude side of Nashville. You find it downtown and near that infamous strip of Broadway wedged between Fifth and the Cumberland river; it's a cross between music row, skid row and red light district (such as it is, it being Tennessee).

It's all there: the Ernest Tubb record store, the Lawrence Brothers Country Store where you can pick up such novelty items as pink plastic guitar-shaped nail-clippers, Acme boots (one size only) and belt buckles as large as dinner-plates. There's also a dusty assortment of long-gone records by Cowboy Copa and Patsy Cline with the odd James Brown and Dixie Cups thrown in.

"We got ALL kinds, we got LOTS, aintch we, Shorty?" That's the selling pitch of one of the Lawrence brothers - two stocky guys as old and crusty as their wares, cigars as thick as their accents and silver collar-points so large you could serve tea on, easy.

And of course the famous Tootsie's Orchid Lounge is still there, although Tootsie herself is dead now and singers and musicians don't sneak out through the back door of the adjacent Ryman to raise hell between shows like they used to. The Ryman is closed, just a museum of tatty but sometimes moving memories, like those rows of mail-boxes the stars used for fan-mail.

But it still looks the same - a dreary red-bricked church converted into a music hall sometime during the American Civil War (the balcony is still called "the Confederate Balcony"). It's a church with rows of wooden benches, creaking wooden floors and pot-bellied stoves in each corner. The stage is unbelievably small and rickety (Nashville being Nashville, they've cut out a square yard of it and nailed it to that of Opryland; but the graft didn't take). Really the building could be some Catholic school in Everton.

That special spirit of the Grand Ole Opry and the embarrassing, yokel Saturday nights is something the city fathers would rather forget. In keeping with the Protestant tradition that made Nashville in the first place, they'd rather mummify what little life and soul the city ever possessed - and preferably milk it too. The same happened to Memphis. I've counted no less than four country music museums and assorted fly-by-night wax-museums.

They'd also rather present another facade to the world - that of Music City, USA. Which is by and large like my hotel in Opryland: as plastic as those wreaths of credit cards Southern businessmen seem to favour, along with cowboy hats and boots, expensive denim suits and solid-gold digital wrist-watches.

You wonder just where J.J. Cale and his funky-butt soulful music fits in a town like this, and yet this is where he's been living these last few years, in Blow-Dry Paradise. It's a city with little nightlife apart from the few tourist-traps that line Printers Alley; a city with few good bars - liquor came late to Nashville, even if they do drink hard.

So why here? That was one of many questions I had for Cale.

All day I had frustratingly driven my rented car from magic address to magic address, searching for Cale, only to find closed doors. From Woodland to Columbia Studio B downtown to Bradley's Barn way out there in the boondocks (Mount Juliet, actually), I feverishly retraced the perimeter of what I knew of J.J. Cale (which is little more than the curiously detailed studio-credits on his album covers). Only Bradley's Barn lived up to my silly expectations, even in that drizzling morning hour, its wooden gates closed.

Owen Bradley's famous studio is where Dylan cut *John Wesley Harding* and where Bradley himself has recorded most of those Loretta Lynn records. Cale recorded there, too, although he seems to have tried just about every studio south of the Madison line, from Muscle Shoals to LA. And then there was Crazy Mamas.

Crazy Mamas was where I was to meet Audie Ashworth at five so we'd drive out to Cale's house together.

Ashworth's base of operation is a big yellow house in a quiet residential area to the south of town. There's no sign, no marker, just a few more cars and pick-up trucks than in the other driveways. And roaming loose in the grounds are a couple of fierce Dobermans. It's here Ashworth lives and works, an arrangement he's not always happy with, but one which reflects his whole approach to business. He likes to keep things as low-key as possible.

His offices are on the ground floor, he lives upstairs and the studio is in the basement. The studio isn't much, just a small room cluttered with equipment, a drummer cage and a sophisticated enough console (although Cale will later tell me they lifted it from Moss Rose's demo-studio downtown, the oldest studio in Nashville). This is the studio that Cale built, figuratively as well as literally.

Audie Ashworth may be known to the public chiefly as J.J. Cale's manager and producer, but here in Nashville - where he's certainly better-known than Cale - he's reckoned as a successful publisher. He's a stocky soft-spoken man with impeccable manners and

a sense of hospitality a notch above the token Southern kind. Under his easy-going manners he is hipper and warmer than most businessmen here in Nashville.

Originally he started out as a singer-songwriter - "like everybody else in Nashville" - but soon found his talent in song publishing. He worked for Capitol for a long time, and his most important connections were Snuff Garrett, the LA producer who was to send him J.J. Cale long before the first LP *Naturally*, and Moss Rose.

It was with Rose that Ashworth finally achieved what he wanted most: independence with his own production company, Audigram. He uses the studio to record demos and occasionally, when he thinks that it can help a song, he'll release it through his small label, Crazy Mamas Gramophone Company. Cale often plays on these demos.

Recently Audie struck gold when he recorded Don Schlitz, a young songwriter from Durham, South Carolina whose song *The Gambler* eventually sold millions of copies after Kenny Rogers used it as the title song for his 1978 album, the *Crazy Mama* single had previously been picked up by Capitol, but after Rogers made it a hit the song got covered by Bobby Bare, Johnny Cash, Tennessee Pulleybone and Charlie Tango.

As we drive through the rush-hour freeway traffic, Audie tells me I'm the first writer Cale has ever allowed in his place. I'm awed at the idea of stalking the Mystery Man to ground, but a biblical "why me?" lurks in the back of my mind. I still expect the encounter to be strained and painful. Cale is notorious for mumbling and grunting through interviews. I remember with a shudder that old writer's saying: J.J. Cale speaks, sort of.

"John will put his privacy over anything," Audie explains. "But he'll talk if he's in the mood. Hell, he loves to talk.

"People think he's that way because they see him when he's on the road, backstage or in hotel rooms. And when he's working, John is kinda tense. He's such a perfectionist; he don't tour that often so he's very concerned about giving people their money's worth. It still surprises him that people would pay to see him, so he wants to have things right, no excuse.

"Like, for instance, that last time in LA at the Civic, the backstage area was like a zoo, all kinds of people drinking and talking. John had spent two hours tuning his guitar, and right before the set someone bumped into it and it fell on the floor. He had to do it all over again. How'd you think *you'd* feel?".

John (never J.J. by the way) lives outside town in a comfortable but unassuming lakeside house, not far from the famous Hermitage, President Andrew Jackson's Colonial domain. Not far from Bradley's Barn either.

In the driveway a superb Airstream trailer sits on blocks, its silver smooth round lines gleaming. On the house door there is the DAY SLEEPER, much in the manner of BEWARE OF THE DOG. Cale is in the large living-room spooning up a yogurt in the gloomy light of the TV showing the ABC Evening News. The place is cluttered with an amazing amount of musical gear, mikes and wiring, it looks just like a studio.

A room opening on to the sun-deck and overlooking the lake is occupied completely by a large console. There are all manners of keyboards and the only thing missing is a drummer cage - but he's "thinking of it". Whereas I'm not surprised to learn he owns 25 guitars, I'm disconcerted to discover that John is an electronics nut, owning all manner of gadgets. They're all related to making music, though; all related to sound.

He gets up, we shake hands and he flops back into his deep armchair. It's the man all right: sloe-eyed, the familiar two-day stubble on a face that could be a coal miner's or a mill worker's; sensible clothes, denim and flannel, construction workers boots.

Ogling my cassette-machine he suddenly springs to life. "How yew du-in' wid'at? Yew plugged all right?" Then seeing the hopeless mess of wires springing from the machine, he looks truly pained. "Hey, let me help you with that," and he proceeds to untangle the stuff.

While he's doing this I tell him that for most Cale aficionados, the trail begins with a curious artefact, the notorious - if hopelessly rare - *Take A Trip Down Sunset Strip*, a quasi-instrumental album released on an obscure Los Angeles label called Viva... "That album was done for a guy named Snuff Garrett in the early '60s when psychedelic music wuz just starting. I was engineering for him at the time, me and Leon Russell was, and he came to me one day and say, 'Why don't you make a record of all these psychedelic songs?'

"Now, I didn't make good records but he knew I could make 'em real cheap, cuz I had all those impoverished friends that I could get for three dollars or ten dollars, so anyway he gave me those songs to do. There was *Eight Miles High* by The Byrds, *Mr Tambourine Man* by Bob Dylan, things like that. There was not enough of them so I wrote four songs so we'd have twelve - instrumental jives kinda deal. So that's what there was.

"Friend of mine's on the front cover, his name's Roger Tillotson. He sang on one of 'em. 'Nother friend of mine named Jimmy Martin is on another one, and whoever was around Leon's house at the time, they all played on it. And I kinda engineered it and it blew mah mind that they put it out. But they did. And it sold absolutely nuthin'...

"He called it *Trip Down Sunset Strip* by The Leather-Coated Minds. And after we recorded the album they had those riots on Sunset Strip with the hippies and all that so I went over there with a little tape machine like you got there, little Sony, and I recorded all those noises and overdubbed it on the album to make it even worse.

"Always surprises me people in Europe mention it; always ask questions about that."

People in Europe like obscure shit.

"Oh, it's definitely obscure. It's definitely *ba-a-ad.*"

Were there other records, before *Naturally*?

"Yee-eah. I recorded three singles for Liberty Records, about that same time. Leon Russell and Snuff Garrett produced the first one; 'twas a thing that I didn't write called *Dick Tracy*. That didn't sell anythang. The second was called *In Our Time* and *Outside Looking In.* That didn't sell anything. The third thing I cut was a song called *Slow Motion*, and the backside was *After Midnight*. That didn't sell either, but I guess that's how Eric Clapton eventually heard the song *After Midnight*.

"Dunno for sure who turned him on to it; it's either Carl Raddle or Leon, or it might a-been Jerry Allison, who was with The Crickets; Delaney Bramlett... They were all hanging out in LA at the time; that was five years after I cut the song. Has to be one of those guys, unless mother sent him a copy, ah don't know..."

When he chuckles, Cale looks just like a crusty baseball player choking on his wad of tobacco. And right now he's laughing a lot. So John was working for Snuff Garrett, a seminal figure in LA at the time who owned Amigos Studios, which eventually became the Warner Studio. Was he doing sessions at the same time?

"Naw, not really. I done some, mostly with Leon and people I knew. In LA at that time to be a studio player you had to read, be a fluent reader, y'know. We're talking between '62 and '65, '67, round that time. Ah mean, I've done enough studio work to know what the sideman is up against, but I haven't made my living doin' that. Not even now in Nashville.

"I've played on a couple of things, on Mike Lauder's thing, on Audie's demos, and sometimes when somebody calls me I'll come down and play, coz I love to pick. But I don't want to do that as a session man, who has to do three or four sessions a day, five days a week, to make any money, right? Well, man, I guess I'd try to do that if I didn't have nuthin' else, you know, but since I can see I can make more money writing songs, why should I be doin' sessions?"

What about Tulsa?

"Well, I worked in Tulsa before and after LA. I'm originally from Oklahoma City, but I was raised and went to school in Tulsa. Then I moved to LA. Sometimes I'd play all by myself, sometimes with a little trio. I musta lived just about everywhere in LA; I liked it there. Sometimes I'd play with a group, like I played with Delaney and Bonnie, I was in that group just before they hit it big...

"I cut those four records, and records are good for the ego, but you can't spend it - they never sold any. Same thing with Delaney and Bonnie. You had George Harrison backstage and all these people telling us we were great, but none of them would give you ten dollars, yew know. I was drawing unemployment, but I needed some more money. So I went back to Tulsa and I just played the guitar in a local bar; I didn't sing or nuthin', just played the guitar.

"Tulsa's really a good nightclub town, lots of bars, you know; they don't pay no money either but you have such a good time you forgit you're poor.

"Then while I was in Tulsa playing, Bobby Keyes - a guy I'd play with in LA - called one night and said they'd just cut *After Midnight* with Eric Clapton which, you know, made my day. So I went right back to sleep *(whooping laughter).* See, I'd heard that jive before...

"But about six months later I heard it on the top 40 radio, and then when they started playing it every hour, I knew it was a hit record, and I said, 'Boy, you in trouble. Cuz I'd gotten adjusted to havin' nuthin', and one thing about havin' nuthin' is, there's no pressure. And I said to myself, 'Boy, that's bad'.

"Then Audie called. I'd come down here b'fore one time with Hubert Long, cuz Snuff Garrett had recommended Hubert Long. So anyway, Audie says, 'You got a hit, come on down let's cut a spec album, we might be able to sell it'. So I came down and we started recording that *Naturally* album, first at Moss Rose's on a four track, then at the Barn."

Did he ever hold any job besides music?

"Yee-eah. I was in the Air Force for a while; which is a real nice job *(guffaw)*... I was in what you call the Reserves... I worked for a steel company when I got out of high school, for about a year and a half, grinding steel. I've cooked hot-dogs and hamburgers in a root-beer stand. I've had about five or six what I call day-gigs, playing music on weekends.

"When I got to California I decided that no matter how bad the pay, I don't care if it's three dollars a night and all the beer you can drink, it's still better than that straight jive. I never cared much for money anyway, and I don't like to get out of bed too early. Although sometimes these days I'm up before everybody is; but then, it's because I don't *have* to, and I can always go to bed at four in the afternoon...

"Ah don't mind working, but I try to enjoy life, too. People say my records are too far in-between, it takes me three years to make 'em an' all; But, you know, I made me some money with those first songs on *Naturally* and I don't see no point becoming a billionaire. Ah already got two of ev'rythang and, man, you can't take it with you, y'know...

"The reason those last two albums took so long is because we were building the studios at the same time we were recording in them, and when you do that you spend more time trying to get the bugs out of the studio than on the music. So we spent a year and a half getting the bugs out of that studio over there (Crazy Mamas). That's what that *Troubadour* album was. Then I started from scratch here, right? And that last album *(5)* was mostly getting the bugs outta here.

"We coulda ordered the best first-class studio, or let somebody else engineer the record in a studio that's already bug-free, but not us; Audie and me, we like to screw with it and see for ourselves and do it ourselves. We had to kinda grow the flour to make the cake, you understand what I'm sayin'?"

But isn't he pissed off that other people have more success with his songs or by copping his licks - for instance Clapton and Dire Straits? It must rankle...

"Why, man? Why should I resent it? You know how hard it is to get Eric Clapton to cut one of your songs, man? You gotta understand, Clapton had a lot of hits, and they've not all been my songs.

"I saw him once. We were playing the Old Vic in London and they all came backstage: Ringo Starr was there, and the Clapton band. They played us *Cocaine*, I didn't even know they had cut it. Then they came and played a bit on the encore, but we wuz working and they were recording, so there was not much time to talk.

"But, y'know, music is free - or should be. He was quite well known before he played any of my kind of music. It helped him go where he wanted to go, and he's probably passing out of that now. At least he put one of my songs on one of his records, to pay me back, you know. It helped his career along, helped mine along, that's all po-sitive, right?

Sure, I influenced a lot of guys, but that's all music is, man - influences.

"When I was young people told me, 'Hey, you sound like Chuck Berry'. I've borrowed from a lot of people. I've listened to Chet Atkins most of my life. I only play that for my own enjoyment, trying to imitate Chet Atkins, but I ain't gonna get no work trying to imitate Chet Atkins.

"All my early influences was rockabilly music. It was coming out of Memphis, coming out of Nashville, right? In other words, in the mid-'50s, there was rockabilly and rhythm'n'blues; that was before they started to call it rock'n'roll. I was like 13 when I heard that; that was when rhythm'n'blues was *new music* to the white folks. I was in school bands and all that, and I not only *lahked* to play rock'n'roll music, but I mean, you *had* to... That's what people asked for in those parts, like Oklahoma and Arkansas..."

Since Cale has been digging the same lone groove for so many years, one wonders whether he sees other musicians socially. Or does he listen to other styles, other kinds of music?

"Oh, yee-ah. If they make a record, I can put it on my turn-table and they're right *free*, and it's generally their best shot, too! That's the beauty of records or television; it's a mass-communication world, we don't have to go visit each other. *That's* a gas too, but to tell you the truth I don't have the time to do that other stuff (social visits). Cuz I'm not only a guitar-player, I'm in all this too (he indicates the recording equipment).

"The guitar is a very, very complicated instrument, but the recording studio is the ultimate instrument, cuz *all* the guitars and *all* the pianos and *all* the orchestras and *all* the people who make any kind of vibrations at all, it all goes into those things. It's the big combine. So I have been learning this instrument. Guitar is my first thing, y'know, but I'm still learning that other one."

Cale gets up to let the dog in. His name is Foley (like the one-time MC at the Grand Ole Opry?) and he quickly proceeds to finish off my coffee. Besides being a coffee fiend, Foley likes ice-cream in a big way. John goes to the kitchen and feeds him.

"Like I said, you can play the guitar in many many styles but there's probably even more styles for making a record, y'know. Cuz what's important is what comes out of your speakers. That's why for the first two albums I kinda tried all kinds of studios - to get the feel, to see what could be done. I've always been curious about those things. And I'm still not very good, but you can gimme an E for effort...

"Friend of mine told me one time - like, he knows me and all that - told me, 'Man, I love that live feel you got on *Magnolia* on that first album. It's rough and it sounds real'. Well, he was shocked when I tol' him that recording was nothing but editing - little bit here, little scratch there. I mean, with the mistakes and all, you'd think it was live, you see...

"Like, I like to record live in the studio, with all the instruments at once, but I almost never do it this way. Cuz to do that you have to be good; you have to play with the same cats for too long, and that costs so much money. So I'm a do-it-yourself kind of guy. On that last album, some cuts I did all by myself, using re-recording and a little machine for the drums. People think my records are 'real', but that's just because I leave so many mistakes in them..."

The subject of digital recording is broached, as well as Ry Cooder's last album.

"Sure, it's great. It's the right direction, you can't argue with that. I mean, the very *idea* is so much superior.

"Like when I told Denny Cordell about quad-recording when it first came out, he said, 'Oh? Well, I

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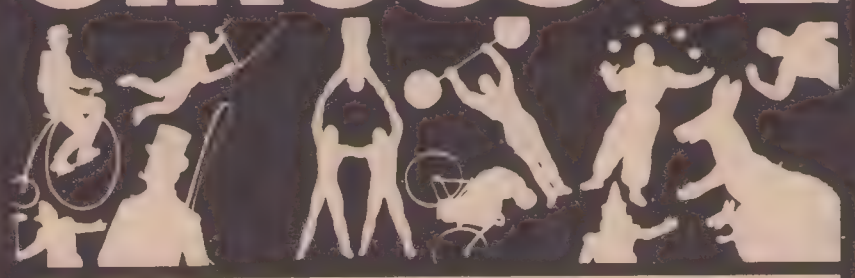

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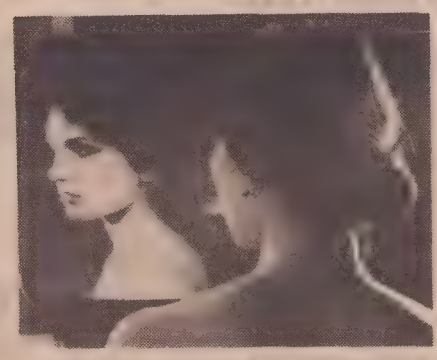

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guess I'll start mixing my records in stereo'. Well, I guess I'll turn to digital when it's already old hat..."

Apart from the odd song about drug-running, most of Cale's music has only one topic: women. It's something he is not going to deny, but he seems at a loss to explain it. By the way, he lives alone.

"W-a-all... most people associate music with love or sex. Plus, women are a real good source for the blues, which I've delved into quite a bit. It's the age-old story over and over again; every once in a while somebody tells it a *little bit* different. Then it's generally a hit when they do..."

But is he aware that people all over the world ball to his music?

"Bowling music? Oh, *balling* music! Oh ye-eah, I'd be playing and some old gal comes up to me and says, 'Hey man, me and my old man have been doing it to your so-and-so song', y'know. And I go... 'Wa-a-ll, I didn't mean to be in y'all's bedroom'."

But did he always play in that snaky style of his?

"Oh no. I played loud rock'n'roll for about ten years, right until I came up to Nashville to record that first album. You know, the kind of rock'n'roll the club owners would say, 'No, you can't play there. You guys are too loud'. By the time I reached 30 years old, my ears wuz tired of it.

"When I came down to Nashville - like, *After Midnight* was a hit and the way Clapton did it was kind of loud driving rock'n'roll, which is also the way I did it five years before on that Liberty single - I'd decided I did not want that sound anymore. The songs I'd written were all of a country blues kind of deal; and then I went down and recorded them, Audie was very surprised. He'd known me as a get-up-there-and-beat-on-the-guitar kind of guy, right? And so... I started doing things way down, subdued, subtle, what-chamay-call-it. Some people call it laid-back. And it's the way I felt.

"Now, at that time loud, hard rock'n'roll was more popular than ever; more popular than when I was playing it. But I'd already done that for ten years and it didn't make me no money, and I'd seen guys that were big stars and went nowhere fast; so, we were kind of the first to put out what you may call mellow music. And people liked it - or seemed to - so I decided to stick to it.

"I just kinda got in trouble when I put out *Cocaine*, cuz all of a sudden I attracted another kind of crowd, different from my old crowd. Especially after Eric Clapton made it a hit. So for a while I had two kindsa audiences: the young loud one wanted to boogie, the other one didn't know what struck them. They just wanted their old laid-back J.J. routine...

"So for about a year after *Troubadour* I was kind of at a crossroads, didn't know which way to go any more. And I had to make a choice fast, cuz with that boogie crowd, those shuffles of mine didn't seem to work too well. They wanted someone up there busting them one..."

"And he CAIN'T do that!" Audie interjects, wheezing like a sea-lion on the couch."

"No. I can. He's jivin'. But anyway, I had a problem right there. Now it's all over. I'm years older and I ain't about to change mah style. And also some of that new crowd got to check my music for what it was, so it's OK..."

Is he comfortable using horn sections?

"Mmmmmm. Those on *Naturally* I thought were OK. I liked the guys I used on that one; they were from Presley's touring band and there was that black cat, Bob Holmes. All you had to do was whistle in their ears and they'd start blowin'; which was just as well, cuz I cain't write music. On *Really* I used Nashville cats, even if I recorded in Muscle Shoals quite a bit..."

What is J.J. Cale's status in Nashville? None of his albums is in the record store racks which suggests that Music City, USA has yet to 'discover' him.

"They don't know me. Well, a lot of musicians here know me because I've played with them at one time or another, but to the music establishment I don't exist. I'm not what they call a country star, and in Nashville that's all they recognize.

"Audie's more part of that establishment than I am, although *(he leers at his friend)* he seems to pull back more and more from that bunch..."

What about the art on his album covers? Five albums, five different artists. Does he have a special interest in that side of the business?

"Sleeves are all done and designed in Hollywood, we have nothing to do with it - although going to school with the guy who painted that racoon on *Naturally* is completely incidental. Guy named Rabon. A real-gone dude. Kind of guy you meet in the street and he goes, 'The sky is blue, the sky is beautiful', and ev'ryone knows that but only Rabon would say it.

"I did a little painting myself, but I had to stop; I was so bad. I think they generally do a good job down there in Hollywood. That *Really* logo got some kind of prize for design; originally it was going to be a 3-D kind of deal, almost a half-inch high. But then they scrapped that, said it would cost too much..."

The conversation drifts and becomes more comfortable, more aimless - a real conversation and not so much a formal interview. John does like to talk.

We rap about France and Django Reinhardt, and how his friend Elmer Valentine got the name for his club, the Whisky-A-Gogo. "He got it from that joint in Paris named that way, only they called it a disco-theque." Valentine owns the Roxy now, still on the Strip.

Recently John played on French singer Eddy Mitchell's album; an album called (would you believe?) *After Midnight.* Mitchell even invited Cale and his band to guest-star during his stint at the Olympia. "We were going to do it," Audie says, "until we learnt it was for three weeks, six days a week and two shows on week-ends..."

"Too much work," Cale mumbles.

(Pic: Michael Putland/LFI)

We decide to go out and get something to eat. Outside the night has turned clear and cold. John talks fondly about his Airstream camper, which he uses quite a lot.

"It's really great inside; all you have to do is reach out, everything is within reach, you don't even have to get up. I don't even go fishin' or nothing. Just take a guitar with me. I like trailer parks. I like to talk to people; to people who don't know what I do, don't know who I am.

"The trouble with that house is I get up and I switch on the tape-machine and before I know it I'm working, even if I didn't want to. But in the camper..."

Dinner is excellent, simple and plentiful. Southern cooking at its best: ribs, chicken, fried okra, marshmallowed sweet potatoes, candied yams and lemon pie to finish. Between bites I ask him about Karl Himmel. I guessed right, he's his favourite drummer.

"Karl is probably the closest thing I have to a friend in Nashville, apart from Audie here. He's from New Orleans and his thing is jazz, not country. He's very unhappy here cuz all they ask of you at sessions is keep the beat. So he's always bitching and less and less people are willing to hire him. I think he wants to go to New York.

"I like to play with him, because one night he can be downright bad, but some other night he'll come up with something that will surprise even himself. And for that, man, I'm willing to overlook anything..."

John also tells us he spent a good part of the night at his place playing with two young musicians from Bill Monroe's band. "Boy, those kids sure can play - banjo, dobro, you name it..."

He also recommends Tom T. Hall's book to Audie. "Best book on Nashville and how it is to be a songwriter here. He really tells it like it is... He was there when Tootsie died..."

On our way back he asks Audie if he can find him some more burning wood, "cuz I done used up all you gave me, and the last batch I bought was all green and not worth shit. Heck, I'd even buy a saw at Sears, if they came all put together. I'm not very good at those things. I do OK for everything electric or electronic, but with a saw I'd probably mess up a finger or two..."

Audie visibly cringes at the thought. We take our leave, although I'll see John briefly the next day at Audie's even managing to take a few snaps as he gets out of his grey Porsche.

Driving back to Crazy Mamas, Audie fills me in on the loose ends: after the next album they're going back to Phonogram/Mercury, although their split from Cordell's Shelter label will be amicable. They just think Cordell is not big enough any more. What he's been doing in the past - leasing the records to other companies in each country Audie feels he should do himself. Also, Cordell's relations with MCA - their distributor - have been aggravated beyond repair because of his involvement in that long Tom Petty legal feud.

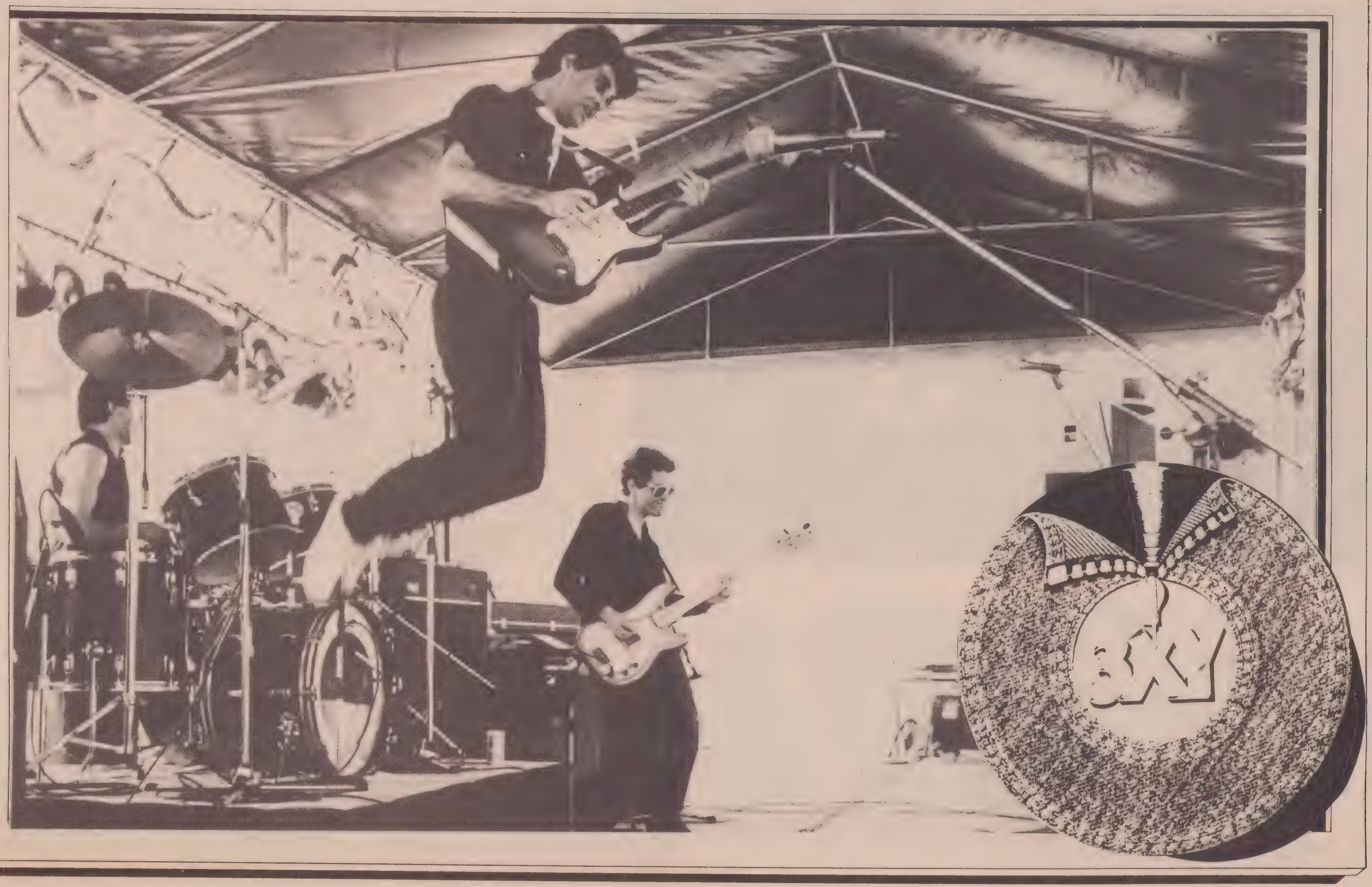
"But we'll leave him England and Ireland," Audie explains. "We coulda gone to court and all that, but John is not the kind of guy to make that sort of aggravation over money. Besides, he likes Cordell. He's the one who helped us in the beginning..."

J.J. Cale fans and guitar pickers the world over will also be pleased to learn that a songbook is to be published by Columbia Books. It comprises 20 Cale songs and how to play them. That's right, John has written a little commentary for each, along with some much needed advice. But of course there are *some* people who didn't wait for the songbook to start playing like Cale and make a fortune. Isn't that so Mr Knopfler?

Audie drives silently for a while. The silence is comfortable. Then, trying to explain that precious and rare relationship the two men have, he just comments, "All I can say about him is that I've known him for better than ten years, that we've done business and we've done five records together, and that he's still a friend. And you don't see a whole lot of that, especially in this business.

"People think Cale is lazy, or things come easy to him and all. Well they're wrong. He likes to cultivate that image, but he works hard at what he does; he's careful. Not many people are capable of handling success and not let themselves be led by it. He's chosen to control his life and success instead of the other way round.

"For that, I respect him."



LIVE!

"God! Did I really say that on Countdown?" (Pic: Ross Barnett)

THE BOOMTOWN RATS (Capitol Theatre, Sydney)

There's a big black curtain across the stage. In big, gold letters it says: THE BOOM-TOWN RATS. There is a host of young girls pressed against the stage apron. They scream, very loudly, every time an indeterminate shape presses against the curtain.

The curtain opens. The band is posed against a backdrop of rainbow hues. Rows of burnished mirrors reflect their backsides, and the straining faces of the crowd pressed up against the stage. Neon strips shaped like shards of jagged lightning hang above the band. There are also shiney circles, dotted with noughts and crosses. The band strikes up a beat. There's a young fresh-faced keyboards player who wears pyjamas and a sailor's cap. There are two tough-looking guitarists and a tough-looking little bass player, who will spend most of the night trying to scratch dandruff out of his hair. There's a blond drummer who looks angelic and fit. And there's someone draped like a soggy rag doll over the edge of the drum rostrum. The rag doll stretches himself and, all gangly-armed and legged, lurches to the microphone.

"It's one of those days where I don't like myself, But I get *along with me OK." (Chill Wind Factor).*

He wears a bowler hat, a gold, lightweight, polyester suit and he dances like an uncoordinated shadow Mick Jagger threw away. The neon and flash coloured lightning, the silver circles irradiate fluorescent white noughts and crosses. Everything that can flash and pulsate and glow, is flashing and pulsating and glowing. And Bob Geldof dances and mimes, and mugs and leers, like someone trapped within a very private frenzy.

There's a lot happening, but there's not very much happening at all. The true-fans, crammed up against the stage, are frenzied, but enthusiasm dwindles to mere interest past the fifth row and dwindles to passing interest up near the foyer bars.

Four or five songs into the set and Geldof pulls out his first audience contact trick. He hauls up photographers crowded against stage front. Takes him some minutes to persuade the first to get up, but finally there's a goodly number up there.

From instamatics clutched in sweat to the highly professional jobs in the hands of Bob King and Philip Morris. "So you're from *ROM* magazine," exclaims Bob to Philip. The song? *Having My Picture Taken,* of course.

Joey's On The Streets Again introduces saxophonist David McHale and a noticeable increase of energy. The band settle into a sweaty, turgid, scampering rhythm, and the people were starting to dance in the aisles.

He's full of calculated pieces of funny business, is Bob Geldof. Things like ritually haranguing the balconies to be up dancing. Set pieces like the end of *Rat Trap,* where the band lean against the drum stand and look blankly into the audience until people stomp their feet and cat call.

The lights, the studied arrogance, interupted by glints of sunny good humour, the clever mime pieces - they all add up to a clever show. But there's only flashes of hot music. *Joey's On The Streets Again* and *Rat Trap* are everything hot and urgent and dirtily beautiful. The sort of thing that *should* get an audience up and dancing with a sudden infusion of energy, and they do.

But there's also some duff stuff. Pieces like *Someone's Looking At You* and *Keep It Up* and an extended version of *I Don't Like Mondays,* where the band and Geldof don't know whether to send up the song, or play it seriously.

By encore time, (which contained some of the band's strongest material, *She's So Modern, Sleep* and *Diamond Smiles*), the crowd is fairly neatly divided into two categories - the ever-loving faithful up the front and those either drifting away or waiting around to see if something *does* happen.

A few things do, none of them of vital musical import. Four or five girls are dragged off with heat exhaustion, Bob pulls a nervous looking girl, dressed in black, onto the stage, the roadies finally pull the big black curtain across to signify THE END. The younger fans up the front scream in disappointment.

After the show a group of younger fans are sitting on the pavement by the side of the theatre. They raise their spirits, every now and then, by chorusing a ragged rat-cheer. "Go home to Sherbet," says a bunch of trendy fashion New Wave-ites as they walk on by. For indeed, these days, concerts by the likes of The Boomtown Rats and even Split Enz are sorting audiences into two distinct fan-groups. The over-20, fashionably-dressed, and a vociferous school-age contingent.

"Sherbet?" say the younger fans in chorus, "they were *your* band mate. We want *THE POLICE."*

Anthony O'Grady

"Annalise, Annalise, can I have your number?" (Pic: Bob King)

THE NUMBERS (Civic & Comb & Cutter)

"This is a modern song..."

The Numbers are a modern band for a modern city. Young, gifted and blonde, they are promoting a great 45 on national TV... they should be what we in Sydney call a happening band.

"This is a social situation..."

But down at the Civic on Tuesday nights, the Numbers don't quite add up to euphoria! They are the background to the casual conversations of the hundred or so people who turn up expecting (demanding?) low-key thrills.

"This is how I will get into your life..."

The Numbers are a thrash - they crash-bash-smash through two sets of fusion rock, trying to wear you down rather than play to you.

Rock and roll itself is old-fashioned, any rock group is by its nature traditional. The Numbers are merely (merely?) a modern angle on an ancient ritual. Real modern groups don't play - it's much more efficient for a band to just record and appear on TV. How long did it take Split Enz to penetrate? How long did it take Christie Allen?

"Just when you were doin' so well..."

The Numbers are working on THE traditional strategy for a Sydney band, wherein they sap their energy to pay their manager, their hire bills and their crew's wages.

They'd be better off sitting at home and working the annoying flab off their style. At the moment they are trying to be the modern Rolling Stones. They should try being merely modern.

Because their original songs already show they can do it.

Among the debris of Stones-meets-Pistols frenzy, there is something unique about The Numbers.

Annalisse is an obvious place to start! Her strident voice is startling, she looks and moves like the real soul of beat music. She's not THAT sexy... but when she bounces her sweaty fringe and swings her big white bass, she's irresistable in a way Debbie Harry will never know about. I wish I lived next door to Annalisse.

I wonder if her and Chris used to sing in the bath together as children, because their harmonies are thicker than blood. Together, they are the vocalists of Australian new music, no doubt.

Even if Chris is not the new guitarist yet. He obviously cut his teeth on *Summertime Blues,* he should throw that song away now that he's grown up.

But if their thrash sometimes lacks imagination, it never lacks efficiency. This is dynamic numeration - the patrons of the Civic don't care much, but the Numbers have power to spare.

"Suddenly you realise you're not alone any more..."

The next night. I happened across the Numbers again. Playing support to a horrid Jimmy and The Boys at the Comb and Cutter in Blacktown.

Forget the lights of the city... the Numbers need to play to hot teenage suburban blood, above the sandy heads of the western youth they loom larger and larger, their thrash seems to find its purpose buckling the knees of the outback. Their *Modern Song* says it all.

"There's nothing in the city, there's nothing there at all."

Michael Porteus

SHY IMPOSTORS (Brownies, Paddington Green Hotel)

"Patti Smith would never have made it in Australia," Melbourne rock figure Jane Clifton once observed rather bitterly. It's hard to imagine the Australian rock scène *producing* a Patti Smith (much less supporting her); but Australia has proved itself capable of producing a Penny Ward, and that's an encouraging start.

The days are long gone since every female writer-cum-singer was compared to Smith simply through a dearth of other compelling rock females; the Impostors are more pragmatic, and they lack the poetic sweep of romanticized vision. Although they tend to overextend their arrangements, allowing Penny room to run the full emotional gamut, they are rarely self-indulgent. There's a tough, dark feel to the sound. On some songs the band bore down a bit too hard, and the mix doesn't help. The impression is one of strong, forward movement with a great deal of dramatic shading.

It's quite easy to relax in the fullness of the sound and just enjoy the vocal variation, but the lyrics are intelligible and not unintelligent. The backing vocals are, if anything, intrusive - there are rough edges in this band that are part and parcel of their generally unassuming presentation. There are only two lights and the band looks drab. For most of the night they also look rather preoccupied, very solemn and very young, but fortunately attention is focussed on Penny anyway and she has the most natural, winning smile I have ever seen on stage. She dances, too, cradling the microphone and moving with unaffected enjoyment.

Only once does any member of the band directly acknowledge the audience, and that was because the snare drum broke and Penny asked if anyone present might just happen to have a spare handy. In this environment it didn't seem unlikely. There were quite a few members of other young bands dancing out front and more than a smattering of familiar Darlinghurst faces. The band seemed secure with their audience and the audience in turn was highly responsive. Tuning breaks between songs were taken as par for the course.

Shy Imposters have some degree of commercial ambition - Penny introduced one song by saying "one day we're going to have a single and this is going to be it!"

As things stand now there are several bands on the inner-city circuit who are almost like house bands for a floating private party - the same crowd in a different pub each week. Shy Imposters couldn't help but broaden their audience if they broadened their perspective.

Elly McDonald

IN-X-S (Civic Hotel, Sydney)

The witty little handbill for the gig proclaims 'In-X-S - A Healthy Way To Live', and I believe it: regular doses of this band could restore my faith in young modern groups having the musicianship to match their creative ideas. They know about dynamics, and about keeping two guitars and keyboards uncluttered - not necessarily by being sparse or minimalist, but by thoughtful arrangements; they play and sing in tune, and have obviously worked on the smooth starts and crisp finishes.

And they rage. Shock-haired singer Michael Hutchence has something of the Steve Cummings sound, but throws himself about the stage with more abandon; collisions with other bouncing bods are miraculously averted. The band used to be called The Farris Brothers: there are three - John on drums, Tim on guitar, and Andrew on keyboards - and they shake the stage. The repertoire seemed about two thirds originals - *We Are the Vegetables* and *Simon* are two titles of good ones that I could distinguish in the mumbled introductions - plus some fine covers of things like *Watching The Detectives* and *You Really Got Me.*

Space doesn't allow more investigation: do it yourself, and look out for a forthcoming record.

Greg Taylor

the charts

Due to a series of industrial disputes, both overseas and in Australia, we are unable to bring you the American and English charts this issue. Settle back instead and enjoy more of the Oz charts, from Kent Music.

oz singles

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	I GOT YOU	Split Enz
2	(2)	BRASS IN POCKET	The Pretenders
3	(5)	SPACE INVADERS	Player (1)
4	(6)	TIRED OF TOEIN THE LINE	Rocky Burnette
5	(4)	ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL PART II	Pink Floyd
6	(3)	ROCK LOBSTER	The B-52's
7	(9)	TOTAL CONTROL	The Motels
8	(7)	PEOPLE	Mi-Sex
9	(10)	SAME OLD GIRL	Darryl Cotton
10	(8)	FLY TOO HIGH	Janis Ian
11	(16)	NO SECRETS	The Angels
12	(14)	ATOMIC	Blondie
13	(13)	ROCKABILLY REBEL	Major Matchbox
14	(17)	THE ROSE	Bette Midler
15	(15)	HE'S MY NUMBER ONE	Christie Allen
16	(11)	CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE	Queen
17	(12)	ROCK WITH YOU	Michael Jackson

18	(35)	•COMING UP	Paul McCartney
19	(29)	•TURNING JAPANESE	The Vapors
20	(20)	DON'T LET GO	Isaac Hayes
21	(18)	COWARD OF THE COUNTY	Kenny Rogers
22	(26)	CALL ME	Blondie
23	(23)	SKINNY GIRLS	Alan O'Day
24	(30)	•WORKING MY WAY BACK TO YOU	Spinners
25	(22)	TOCCATA	Sky
26	(21)	WITH YOU I'M BORN AGAIN	Billy Preston and Syreeta
27	(24)	REFUGEE	Tom Petty & The Heartbreakers
28	(27)	CARMILLA	Jon English
29	(19)	DAY TRIP TO BANGOR	Fiddler's Dram
30	(46)	•AN ENGLISHMAN IN NEW YORK	Godley & Creme
31	(25)	ROMEO'S TUNE	Steve Forbert
32	(33)	YOU MAY BE RIGHT	Billy Joel
33	(38)	•CRYING	Don McLean
34	(37)	THE BOYS LIGHT UP	Australian Crawl
35	(28)	LOCOMOTION	Ritz
36	(31)	PILOT OF THE AIRWAVES	Charlie Dore
37	(45)	•RIDE LIKE THE WIND	Christopher Cross
38	(32)	DO THAT TO ME ONE MORE TIME	Captain & Tennille
39	(42)	GONNA GET ALONG WITHOUT YOU NOW	Viola Wills
40	(40)	WALKING ON THE MOON	The Police
41	(34)	DREAMING MY DREAMS WITH YOU	Colleen Hewett
42	(48)	HIM	Rupert Holmes
43	(—)	•CAPTAIN BEAKY	Keith Michell/Captain Beaky and his Band
44	(36)	HOW DO I MAKE YOU	Linda Ronstadt
45	(39)	PLEASE DON'T GO	KC & The Sunshine Band
46	(44)	ON THE RADIO	Donna Summer
47	(47)	MY KNIGHT IN BLACK LEATHER	Bette Midler
48	(41)	YES I'M READY	Teri De Sario
49	(—)	SEXY EYES	Dr. Hook
50	(49)	HEAVEN MUST HAVE SENT YOU	Bonnie Pointer

oz albums

This Week	Last		
1	(1)	TRUE COLOURS	Split Enz
2	(5)	GLASS HOUSES	Billy Joel
3	(2)	THE WALL	Pink Floyd
4	(4)	THE ROSE	Original Soundtrack/Bette Midler
5	(6)	OFF THE WALL	Michael Jackson
6	(3)	GREATEST HITS	KC & The Sunshine Band
7	(7)	THE B-52's	The B-52's
8	(13)	•STARDUST	Willie Nelson
9	(8)	AGAINST THE WIND	Bob Seger And The Silver Bullet Band
10	(9)	THE PRETENDERS	
11	(11)	NIGHT RAINS	Janis Ian
12	(10)	SKY	Sky
13	(14)	THE MOTELS	The Motels
14	(16)	MIDDLE MAN	Boz Scaggs
15	(12)	REGGATTA DE BLANC	The Police
16	(17)	12 GOLD BARS	Status Quo
17	(18)	CALM BEFORE THE STORM	Jon English
18	(15)	DAMN THE TORPEDOES	Tom Petty

19	(27)	•THE ANGELS GREATEST	The Angels
20	(26)	•FULL BOAR	Various Artists
21	(25)	THE BOYS LIGHT UP	Australian Crawl
22	(19)	KENNY	
23	(22)	THE JAMES GALWAY COLLECTION	James Galway
24	(20)	MAD LOVE	Linda Ronstadt
25	(21)	DESTINY	Jacksons
26	(38)	•THE FLUTES OF PAN	Gheorghe Zamfir
27	(23)	SUDDENLY	The Sports
28	(31)	THE SOUND OF BREAD	Bread
29	(28)	JACKRABBIT SLIM	Steve Forbert
30	(—)	•DUKE	Genesis
31	(45)	•FREEZE FRAME	Godley Creme
32	(33)	DYNASTY	Kiss
33	(30)	FEEL THE HEAT	The Radiators
34	(—)	•MAJOR MATCHBOX	Major Matchbox
35	(24)	OUTLANDOS D'AMOUR	The Police
36	(—)	•EAT TO THE BEAT	Blondie
37	(37)	CHRISTOPHER CROSS	Christopher Cross
38	(29)	THE SPECIALS	The Specials
39	(36)	20 GOLDEN GREATS	Nat King Cole
40	(34)	TUSK	Fleetwood Mac
41	(47)	THEN SINGS MY SOUL	John MacNally
42	(43)	TRANSLATOR	The Aliens
43	(—)	•LIVE IN AMERICA	Little River Band
44	(32)	GET HAPPY	Elvis Costello & Attractions
45	(46)	LOOK HEAR	10cc
46	(—)	40 GREATEST	Perry Como
47	(40)	THE BEST OF KENNY ROGERS	Kenny Rogers
48	(42)	HEAD INJURIES	Midnight Oil
49	(35)	DIONNE	Dionne Warwick
50	(48)	LONDON CALLING	The Clash

dance report

(Most played trax in rock clubs and discos.

1	I GOT YOU	Split Enz
2	BRASS IN POCKET	The Pretenders
3	SPACE INVADERS	Player (1)
4	DON'T LET GO	Isaac Hayes
5	ROCK LOBSTER	The B-52's
6	FLY TOO HIGH	Janis Ian
7	ROCK WITH YOU	Michael Jackson
8	MANDOLAY	La Flavour
9	PEOPLE	Mi-Sex
10	FUNKY TOWN	Lipps Inc.
11	CRAZY LITTLE THING CALLED LOVE	Queen
12	AND THE BEAT GOES ON	The Whispers
13	LOCOMOTION	Ritz
14	RAPPER'S DELIGHT	Sugarhill Gang
15	THE SECOND TIME AROUND	Shalamar
16	ANOTHER BRICK IN THE WALL PART II	Pink Floyd
17	STOMP	The Brothers Johnson
18	CALL ME	Blondie
19	DON'T STOP 'TIL YOU GET ENOUGH	Michael Jackson
20	NO SECRETS	The Angels

VINYLISING

"If you're buying, mine's a double brandy"

Empty glass, full heart

PETE TOWNSHEND
Empty Glass (Atlantic)

The first thing most people do on hearing this album is to register surprise at how well Townshend sings. It's not as gutsy a voice as Roger Daltry's, but there's the same dramatic shifting from choirboy to screamer, similar range and similar timbre. Of course he's been singing backup, and the odd solo in the Who for years, and he could be heard clearly on *Rough Mix*, the album he did with Ronnie Lane some years ago. But one's grown used to thinking of him as guitarist and writer. This is the first time he's done all the vocals, and he does them good.

As on recent Who albums, Townshend plays as much polyphonic synthesisers as guitar. Like Keith Richard, he's always favoured 'rhythm lead' rather than single-note solos: the opener, *Rough Boys*, and the closer, *Gonna Get Ya*, are great examples. Some of the orchestral synthesiser sounds are amazingly 'real': horns are credited for only one track, but it's hard to believe that the powerful brass sounds throughout the album are electronic. The whole band is excellent: the Who's keyboard player 'Rabbit' Bundrick, Tony Butler on bass and divers drummers, (mainly Simon Philips, but one track from Kenny Jones).

Rough Boys is dedicated to Townshend's kids and the Sex Pistols: he's probably the only one of the Old Guard who could get away with such public homage without seeming to crawl, and the track is an absolute ripper. *Jools and Jim* also shows Townshend's awareness of the post '75 upheaval in U.K. rock thinking: it's directed at Julie Burchill and Tony Parsons, two of the most celebrated journalistic celebrators of punk, and acid-penned castigators of Sixties' Survivors. *"Typewriter tappers/You're all just crappers... Typewriter bangers/You're all just hangers on... They don't give a shit Keith Moon is dead/Is that exactly what I thought I read?"*: hard lines, though with endearing self-honesty and adult compassion he says later - *"But I know for sure that if we met eye to eye/A little wine would bring us closer, you and I/'Cos you're right, hypocrisy will be the death of me..."*

Townshend isn't scared to be vulnerable. *I Am An Animal, And I Moved* and *Empty Glass* are all revealing of a man who believes that he has found a true guru (Meher Baba), but he's humble enough not to preach, a man who *"doesn't know how to lie anymore/I'm boozing to pray."* Mixtures of bravado and anguish.

Let My Love Open The Door and *A Little Is Enough* are sunnier, the first almost Cat Stevensy, the second rockier. *Cat's In The Cupboard* is very 'Oo, dramatic vocals, power chords, and big drum fills; not as interesting as the other songs but *sounds* good.

The only throwaway on this album is *Keep On Working* - Townshend's rarely been convincingly humorous, and this bit of whimsy certainly isn't. Otherwise it's a great record. Most solo albums from longterm band members, either fail to measure up to group efforts, or signal frustrations. *Empty Glass* is neither: some of the material can stand with the best Townshend has written.

A footnote on the title: I know Townshend has a perfectly convincing spiritual explanation of the Empty Glass - but the cover *does* have this note: "Thanks to Remy Martin Cognac for saving my life and making the bloody stuff so expensive."

Greg Taylor

CAPTAIN BEEFHEART
Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller) (Virgin)

Captain Beefheart is one of the single most innovative figures ever to work within a rock'n'roll context - at least as important as, say, the Beatles, Bob Dylan or the Velvet Underground. But unlike Dylan or the various ex-Velvets and ex-Beatles (with the possible exception of John), Captain Beefheart is an erratic and unpredictable artist who retains the ability to surprise his audience.

Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller), represents a 'come-back'. And a timely one it is too, because it's only now the Captain's influence is being acknowledged, by bands like Public Image Ltd and Pere Ubu, and even Australia's own Boys Next Door and Whirlywirld.

Captain Beefheart's career declined in the early seventies, with the release of *Unconditionally Guaranteed*. Previous to that, he'd produced some of rock'n'roll's greatest moments on the albums *Trout Mask Replica, Lick My Decals Off Baby, The Spotlight Kid* and *Clear Spot*. *Unconditionally Guaranteed*, however, was, for some reason, an unabashed stab at Stardom. Not only didn't it work, it reduced his ecclectic musical gifts to pop. Between then and now, the Captain has appeared only briefly, with his 'friend' Frank Zappa, on *Bongo Fury* (which really wasn't worth the effort), and on the soundtrack to Paul Schrader's *Blue Collar* (which was).

Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller), however, marks the return of Captain Beefheart *and* the Magic Band - the way it ought to be. (Work was actually begun on this album in 1976, but because of contractual complications with Zappa, Beefheart was forced to abandon it and start again last year).

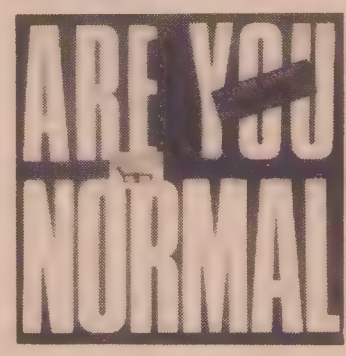
This Magic Band are not the Magic Band of old, but they can at least wear the name with pride. Their performance on this album is 'straighter' than the jagged free-form careering of the Magic Band circa *Trout Mask Replica*, but still they make most rock'n'roll bands look contrived and unadventurous. While the excursions of Jeff Tepper, Bruce Fowler, Eric Feldman, Richard Redus and Robert Williams are very much rooted in traditional forms (essentially the blues - as the Magic Band always was), they reject the limitations, and the result is a simultaneously fluid and jumpy feel, complete with gorgeous horn, electronic and percussive embellishments.

The Captain himself is in fine form. His remarkable voice - a voice second only to Howlin' Wolf's - remains, yet another instrumental addition to the Magic Band. Neither has his absurd wit diminished, and his *concern* is greater than ever - indeed, this album is 'dedicated to all conservation and wildlife preservation organizations everywhere'.

The album's only real weak moments are the two tracks on which the Captain doesn't sing - *Ice Rose* and *Suction Prints*, relatively rigid instrumentals that are reminiscent of Zappa. Otherwise, it's even throughout, although two other tracks, *Tropical Hot Dog Night* and *Harry Irene*, are extraordinary in that they possess enough potential to make successful singles.

Shiny Beast (Bat Chain Puller) is an album that transcends trends, to expose most rock'n'roll for the ritualised rubbish it is, and proves that Captain Beefheart's magic powers haven't deserted him.

Clinton Walker.



10 CC
Look Hear (Are You Normal) (Mercury)

10cc established themselves long ago as one of the more gifted and professional bands to emerge from England in the seventies with a warmth and wit that those of us who had lamented the loss of the pure craftsmanship, the love and care of the Beatles, so easily attached ourselves to. Not out of comparison, mind you, but out of respect. 10cc picked up the baton and ran with it, breaking records and bringing the crowds to their feet in a roar of approval. Good pop music was born in England and here was a band to carry on the legacy. But as is the way of all things, the band fragmented into two units with Stewart and Gouldman carrying the 10cc banner, while Godley and Creme locked themselves away and invented things. Prior to this split the band made some amazing records. Eric Stewart's *I'm Not In Love* must surely be one of the finest rock love ballads ever written, the earlier *Rubber Bullets*, a song of contemporary issues and fine social parody, was great radio and made you laugh and think at the same time. Even after the split, the albums were showcases of extraordinary talent. *Deceptive Bends* with the singles *Good Morning Judge* and *The Things We Do For Love* and *Bloody Tourists* with *Dreadlock Holiday:* all good stuff, and although the band were attracting some criticism from the purists, who felt they were sacrificing the characteristic warmth and humour in favour of recording techniques and a self-conscious artiness, the band were at their peak providing consistently entertaining singles and stunning albums.

However, with *Look Hear* the band has taken a step deeper into studio tricks and mammoth productions, and slightly missed the point. The human element is lessened and it all sounds very impersonal, very clinical, very sterile. Goddamn it, no one *gets up* on the whole album. There are no instant grabbers. Nothing that leaves you panting for more, nothing to satisfy you.

Eric Stewart and Graham Gouldman spend a lot of time searching for that *great* song, but the only time the old lyrical spirit emerges is on a track from keyboardist Duncan Mackay and guitarist Rick Fenn called *Welcome To The World*. In *One Two Five*, the single, Stewart and Gouldman paint cynical pictures of life in a disco and then wrap it all up in a catchy disco beat that will have the very people they are sending up leaping to the perspex floor and shaking their booties in time with the music.

The new band members, Mackay and Fenn, write a proportion of the songs on this album. Mackay's presence seems to have given the band a reason to *explore* some other areas by giving a new bias to the keyboards in the overall arrangements. But the effect on *Welcome To The World* has the band come off sounding like a poor man's Toto. Rick Fenn's *Don't Send We Back*, a song of social conscience about Asian Boat People is set to a frantic Brazillian tempo with marimbas *et al*, and strikes untrue. And G. Gouldman's fascination with things reggae is strongly evident in the limp *How Am I Ever Gonna Say Goodbye*.

10cc's secret ingredient was

always their ability to take a new and refreshing look at common things.

Now they come off slick, impersonal and more than a little cynical. *Look Hear* has lost the laughs, the energy and the good times that was the 10cc trademark. Someone once said, *'Art for Art's Sake, Money for fuck's sake.'* I hope it ain't true.

Doug Tartan

Androids for your pleasure

GENESIS
Duke
(Charisma)

During a year's break from recording as a group, necessitated by problems on Phil Collin's part (his marriage was breaking up), both Tony Banks and Mike Rutherford produced solo albums; *A Curious Feeling* and *Small Creep's Day* respectively. Now Genesis are back together on this, their tenth album. It bears all the hallmarks we have come to expect - grandiose chord progression, majestic synthesisers of Tony Banks, the crisp, constantly changing drumming of Phil Collins knitting together the exploratory (though not as much as he used to) melodic bass lines of Michael Rutherford. Genesis are survivors, and more than that they are one of the most evocative bands around. They use their music, not to change the world but to evoke moods, atmospheres and emotions.

And if you think they are too wimpy to rock, you're dead wrong. Take *Turn It On Again*, which could easily have come out of the new-look Split Enz. It has bags of punch and melody, a good hook and a classic radio single ending chant. A far cry from *Follow You, Follow Me*, though there are a few of those on the album too, a couple from Collins specifically reflecting the personal crisis he has been through. On *Misunderstood*, it works fine, with a clever mix of the kind of melody you'd expect from an L.A. funk band over a driving, strictly English rock backing, augmented with Banks' synth, but rhythmically broken up in the Grand Genesis manner without loss of momentum.

Among the highlights on the album is the grand beginning. that leads into splintered up-tempo *Behind The Lines. Heathaze*, a classic Tony Banks ballad, steadily climbs in intensity as the dreamer of the song tries to drag himself out of his lazy dream back into the harshness of a real world. It *sounds* corny, but it works well musically. The album ends in two pieces called *Duke's Travels* and *Duke's End* which start with a piece of African percussion overlaid with chordal progressions, reminiscent of different countries, (even a touch of bagpipe chords!). It then returns to an uptempo reprise of *Guide Vocal* (from side one) with vaguely apocalyptic, Biblical overtones. But the album does not carry out that threat of a concept, and remains a masterful collection of beautiful *and* punchy pomp rock. It leaves all the American imitators for dead. It's definitely old wave, but they are bloody good at what they do. At least they didn't try to kid anyone and jump on a bandwagon - they have stayed on the one *they* started.

Michael Smith

MI-SEX
Space Race
(CBS)

Graffiti Crimes saw Mi-Sex claw their way out of the inner-city slums into the higher reaches of the pop charts. It was sort of technoflash-meets-heavy-metal-meets-strong-pop-melodies, and the lyrics combined the most gothic visions of say, the Angels, with the most robotic sensibility of say, Gary Numan. It was a pretty weird mixture alright but they finally fused the elements into a real smasheroo hit with *Computer Games* and suddenly, all was clear. Mi-Sex, the new champions of future pop, now! As irresistible as Space Invaders, as palatable as a McDonalds - this band could become the Moody Blues of the '80s. And so, to *Space Race* - which, musically, is a lot, lot more streamlined than *Crimes*. They've slimmed off some of the technoflash flab and modified that old HM beat into a neato, mobile, sometimes disco-ish backbeat. And all the elements that made the first such irresistible pop are retained. A hook in every line. Frequent monologue interludes, searing guitar riffs, soaring keyboard glories, darkly muttered choruses. A mood conveyed of angry young men caught in an age of technological emptiness and reacting to the same with grim technological intensity.

Even when they use a familiar-sound riff as on the start of *It Only Hurts When I'm Laughing* (very, *very* similar to the opening bars of Mental As Anything's *The Nips Are Getting Bigger)* they turn the thing into a Mi-Sex matrix with vast explosions of keyboards and grimly intoned vocals about a lost love affair.

Elsewhere, the band keep exploring a modern sensibility of people lost within themselves, people chasing people, people chasing themselves, people being alienated by people, and embracing the blessed void of technology *"What will happen to the family/when the day comes when the child no longer owes his existence to two biological parents/Genetic engineering/life can now begin in a test tube/the idea both fascinates and appeals to me... carbon copy people" (People).*

Line up for the Space Race - don't worry, you've already lost the human race (Slippin' Out).

All in all, there's not much joy in the current Mi-Sex. There's catchy music, irresistible, blatent hooklines and a wonderful beat. They sound a lot like someone who's lost in love, who's suspicious of technology, but still he can't resist pressing the buttons...

It's unfortunate they press their highly developed melodic skills into action so bleakly, (check out *Ice Cold Dead,* for example). But then, they *do* reflect a current sensibility accurately, albeit in over-inflated, style.

Line up here to be imprinted with the message of now.

Anthony O'Grady

BOZ SCAGGS
Middle Man
(CBS)

While digging up the poop on Mr Scaggs and his career, this interesting quote came to light from the *Illustrated Encyclopedia of Rock: "Although Scaggs has been placed in the hands of influential producers like Glyn Johns and Johnny Bristol, he (Scaggs) seems set to remain a minor cult figure, with a following which has hardly deviated since the release of 'Boz Scaggs' (Atlantic 1972)."* Of course, this issue is a trifle out of date, being published in 1976, prior to the metamorphosis of Boz Scaggs from Texan r&b exponent and partner in crime to the likes of Steve Miller and the late great Duane Allman, to the super slick performer and creator of *Silk Degrees.* As Boz himself is often heard to cry, "I'm dealing with an audience that thinks *Silk Degrees* is my first album." This album elevated Scaggs from the cult following to the status of international superstardom and, my word, it *was* a good album. Albeit a touch L.A., a touch smooth and easily accessible, and every track was instantly programmable into radio formats of the time. Boz followed with *Down Two, Then Left,* an album that did little to stray from the successful formula established with Silk Degrees. And now comes *Middleman* and the first thing that hits home is a return to the re-establishing of some roots.

With a change of producers (Joe Wissert making way for Bill Schnee), the same old boys from Toto, including David Hungate, Jeff Porcaro, Steve Lukather (so much for their resolution not to work sessions once Toto got off the ground) and help from the likes of Carlos Santana, this album gets down in places, but unfortunately also bogs down in places. The urge to over produce and over sweeten is still there, and some of the songs may not be up to Scagg's usual standard.

Outstanding tracks include *Breakdown Dead Ahead,* a little steamer in the vein of *Lido* from *Silk Degrees,* with fine guitar playing from Steve Lukather, and the title track *Middleman.*

Do Like You Do In New York, a moody strut through New York airs and graces, and the sickly sweet *Simone,* however, are more like we have come to expect from Boz Scaggs; slick, cool and a little expression-less. It is only when the song allows the band to let go and get tough that this album rises above being anything other than ordinary in the way we have come to regard L.A. heavies and their product. Maybe the encyclopedia was right. Boz Scaggs is still a cult figure, the only difference being his following is a lot bigger than it used to be.

Doug Tartan

AYERS ROCK
Hot Spell
(Red Rock Records)

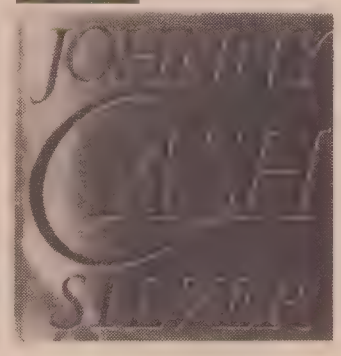
What a shame the Rock didn't get this album together a couple of years ago, when the Doobie Bros (among others) were selling funky, jazz-tinged rock by the yard. This is a superbly performed album with some pleasant compositions... and the popular climate for it has definitely passed. The band, one of Australia's prides in the mid-seventies, when A&M were spending large sums for them to record in LA lingers on the pub circuit, still playing well, still exploring funk, still enjoying extended instrumentals while the rest of the rock world pursues three-minute singles.

Only two of the early members remain: guitarists and vocalists Chris Brown and Jimmy Doyle. Between them they're involved in the writing of five of the eleven tracks (Doyle in collaboration with drummer Hamish Stuart on two); the seven years they've spent together have blended their writing and playing styles so that it's hard to tell them apart. None of their numbers really stand out: as you're listening it sounds good, all the right scales, tidy construct-ions... and afterwards it's just a blur in the memory.

Relative newcomer, keyboard player Andy Cowan, is a strong and more distinctive newcomer, responsible for another five tracks. *So Deep In Love* and *City Night Life* have strong tinges of Michael McDonald, and are two of the most alive tracks. Percussion-ist Keith Caisey's *Sister Feels She* doesn't measure up to the other ten tracks - I know these guys can play this selection of feels in their sleep... and that's what it sounds like.

If you have sympathies for this laid-back, musicianly style, this is a classy Australian album for you. I respect the players - Andy Cowan and Hamish Stuart are two particularly deserving of much wider recognition, and now-departed bass player Steve Hogg is no slouch either - but I'm corrupted by Modern Sounds; can't get a flush out of *Hot Spell.*

Greg Taylor



JOHNNY CASH
Silver
(CBS)

It's heartening to read the letter from forty-nine year old Johnny Cash to his Mama, reprinted on the back of this shiny silver L.P.

"Now after twenty-five years in the profession, I think maybe my voice is still suitable at times to be played on the radio. You still like it, don't you Mama? That's what matters to me."

And that about sums up this newie from the former pill popping country king. He hasn't changed all that much in the past twenty-five years, and yes, his voice is still deep, still sharp, and still forceful. And it's still suitable, at times, to be played on the radio.

There's nothing really special about *Silver,* it's just good ole, home-spun, Cash Country.

There isn't a *Boy Named Sue, Orange Blossom Special* or *Ballad of a Teenage Queen,* here.

Instead, a few Cash penned toons of down home livin' and lovin!

Jack Hale Jr provides brass arrangements and his playing talents on four of the tracks, most effective being *Lately I Been Leanin' Toward The Blues.*

Other worthwhile tracks are *Cocaine Blues, I'm Gonna Sit On The Porch,* and *(Ghost) Riders in the Sky.*

Vince Lovegrove

ROGER POWELL
Air Pocket
(Bearsville)

Roger Powell has respectable credentials. Since 1974, he has been the keyboard-playing backbone of Utopia, Todd Rundgren's answer to Yes/ELP, replacing the *three* keyboard-players who were with the band at the time. He also toured with Bowie for a year, accompanying him on the Oz tour, as well as working on the last two Bowie albums. He has a considerable reputation in the States as a teacher of electronic keyboard techniques, writes a column in a keyboard magazine, and has designed a keyboard that allows him to wander the stage in true guitar-hero fashion while being able to play his bank of synthesisers by remote control. Impressed?

With all that behind him, this, his second solo LP (the last was recorded in '74) should be amazing, and, for the variety of

sounds he creates, especially on side two, it cannot be denied that he is quite innovative. His *March of the Dragonslayers* harks back to the seminel *Switched On Bach* set of the early sixties, by Walter/Wendy Carlos, and there are further reminders of that style on the rest of side two in *Prophecy* and *Sands of Arrakis,* all great Sci-fi synthesiser fodder. Powell doesn't restrict himself to synthesiser either in his search for new sound, being also credited with playing "transite sewer pipe".

The problem is that, though he comes up with some stunning sounds, he still tends to restrict his area of exploration to the more obviously classical/rock progressions, reminiscent of some of Keith Emerson's better moments. Side one is the 'commercial' side (many American albums seem to do this, split the LP into AM/FM or accessible/avant-garde, etc.), and features three vocal tracks among the otherwise instrumental orientation of the album. Powell has a strong voice, but sometimes a bit close to Greg Lake.

As a whole, *Air Pocket* is a personal achievement for Powell, but too derivative to be the brilliant album his experience and expertise should deliver. It will sit quite comfortably with UK, ELP and Fripp/Eno material, if overshadowed by them.

Michael Smith

DARRYL COTTON
Best Seat In The House
(EMI)

The name of the game is 'evolve or die'. As the environment changes, so too, the beasties have to learn new tricks to stay alive. That bumbling complacent behemoth, the dinosaur, took a little long in picking up on the changes and one day put a couple of huge feet wrong in the swamp and suddenly, what was once the king of the world, became the fossil fuel of another age.

Call it 'survival of the fittest', call it 'selective evolution', call it what you will, but the fact of the matter is, it don't cut the gig if it ain't strong enough to crawl out of the swamp and make a stand.

Darryl, an endangered species himself, the last of the pink satin clad pre-pubescent pop stars, has made a stand with his first solo album *Best Seat In The House,* a stand that unfortunately has put butterfly wings on a dinosaur while its feet are still firmly stuck in the mud.

There is a very impressive list of session credits that includes most of LRB and several other heavies, but apart from Pellicci's usual solid drumming and a few bits of nice guitar work from David Briggs, nothing outstanding.

This is not to say that *Best Seat In The House* is a bad album. In fact it is, in places slick and smooth, with a touch of raunch here and there and really some fine playing from the assembled multitudes. But overall the whole thing comes off as being very limp, dull and lifeless, and all much too *controlled.* The songs themselves would appear to be the main stumbling block. All the tracks, bar a lamentable version of *Darlin', I Can't Let Go* and a piece of flimsy funk *Love Too Strong,* are written by Darryl or Darryl and a combination of friends including David Briggs, Beeb Birtles, Graham Goble and producer Chris Christian.

And they are for the most part an uninteresting collection of songs. One notable exception is the first single from the album, *Don't Let It Get To You,* a good song he wrote with Jamie Dunn, and, to me, the only track that has a certain fullness, a richness and colour that for some reason doesn't appear anywhere else on the album.

The current single *Same Old Girl* is here, along with a Cotton/Briggs song, *(No More) Lonely Nights;* that seems a likely contender for the next single. It is a good, rockier song, different from the past singles, but, after a good start, it seems to run out of steam. Maybe after a few months on the road with a hot band we'll see a touch of *joie de vivre,* a touch of roughness, and a touch of spontaneity to Darryl's music. There's no question of the boy's talent, just his direction.

Doug Tartan

ORIGINAL MIRRORS
Original Mirrors
(Mercury)

Records like this mystify me. I mean, why are they made in the first place? What's the point? They've got so little to offer.

Original Mirrors are a 'rock band'. Dressed in 'new wave' (and I thought it was a dead horse) clothing, they might sell better.

Original Mirrors is so *ordinary* it almost doesn't exist. The band can play their instruments, and the production is 'good', but the playing is tired, unimaginative, and the sound is cold as well as being full of glossy gimmicks. And the songs themselves are so damn empty...

Clinton Walker

SHARON O'NEILL
Sharon O'Neill
(CBS)

A lady who writes all her own material and is well established as New Zealand's leading female rock artist... interesting. Check out this, her second album... real nice. We may have another Kiwi chart killer on our hands.

Not that Sharon O'Neill is pop stuff; this is mainstream rock of the gentler variety from a serious songwriter and musician. You won't hear Christie Allen or Marcia putting forward lines like "Let me out. Like the new blood at the slaughter/I've been dying to get out here for a long time now", which open the single *Words,* or "Now the moon lies herself out on top of the water/She's as naked as we were born/And the satay and beer paralyses me here" *(Asian Paradise).* Both the sentiments and the music are acceptable for universal radio programming, but still honestly inventive.

O'Neill cites Max Gronenthal, Marc Jordan and Kenny Loggins as writing influences; I hear traces of Jackson Brown in many of the melodies, and echoes of Ronstadt and Bonnie Raitt in her voice, though she's fresher than either. None of the feels get much beyond a trot, though the band, sterling members of NZ's session fraternity, is tasty, and American producer Jay Lewis has organised good sounds and played a lot of guitar. I'd like to hear it all live, see some of the volume and tempo up a bit. Guess I'll have that chance when she tours next month.

Greg Taylor

NEW ADVENTURES
New Adventures
(Polydor)

This trio from Holland makes a brave attempt to provide new adventures via well worn paths.

They provide ample proof that heavy metal lives, even though it's now somewhat tarnished.

Seven tracks are written by guitarist Peter Bootsman, whose guitar licks are well worth listening to, even if just for the potential.

There's a Chuck Berry toon, *Come On,* the original impact of which has been lost in the reworking. Not so, however, for the band's simple block-rocked version of Lennon and McCartney's *You Can't Do That.* Gone are the repeated refrains in the *'you can't do that',* but somehow the song fairly boots along. A good, solid rocker, this one.

Drive Me Wild and *Genie Dance* are also worth hearing.

Briefly, this aint a bad album. But if you're like the rest of us, and have to choose your buys carefully, there are plenty of Aussies turning out better stuff right now.

Vince Lovegrove

GRAHAM NASH
Earth and Sky
(Capitol)

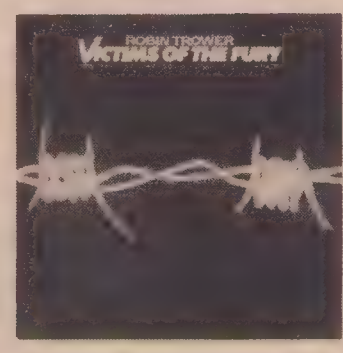
Quiet, gentle, sweet... Graham Nash's new album comes as a welcome relief. Love songs to make you tingle, not vomit.

Surprisingly, for an old master of the '70s, this album is quite contemporary in concept. *In The 80s,* the final track, is an expression of the fear and anger at the back of everyone's minds as we enter one very shaky decade: *"You and me have got to decide/We'll be lucky if we survive,/in the 80s."* Many have felt it but few artists have put it that bluntly: The world's a mess and we're all running scared. *TV Guide* has the same thing in mind... A salute to the late king of prophetic sci-fi: *"And the ghost of George Orwell is/turning in his grave. Is every-/body a slave?"*

Yet, throughout *Earth and Sky,* there pervades a tone of peace. Whatever happens, beauty and awareness of right do exist and, maybe, they'll win out.

Musically, there's nothing new here but it's clean, tight, spotlessly produced soft rock... And so it should be, considering the assortment of friends that turned up to lend a hand. Nicolette Larson donated her vocal chords and Joe Walsh contributed some slick guitar. Jackson Browne, Stephen Stills and Leah Kunkel (to mention but a few) also feature.

Samantha Trenoweth.



ROBIN TROWER
Victims Of The Fury
(Chrysalis)

Not much has changed!

Bassist James Dewar (ex-Stone the Crows) is still with Trower after an eight year association, and ex-Sly Stone drummer Bill Lordan once again steam rolls the trio into heavy metal prominence, after his fifth year. In fact this album doesn't sound all that different from stuff Trower was releasing in '76.

The elpee's title is apt. In a way, Trower *HAS* been a victim of the new musical fury.

There are a few standout tracks. The bluesey *Into The Flame* with elongated wah wah guitar riffs. *The Shout* with typical Hendrix-styled vocals; *Fly Low,* which could easily be released as a single, although not truly representative of Trower... and the familiar, heavy-metal riff of *Jack And Jill.* Then there's *Roads to Freedom,* the title track, and the Paul Rodgers-sounding, *Only Time.*

Being a Hendrix fan, I have always preferred the master to his apprentice. Be that as it may, Trower can be placed alongside the late Tommy Bolin and Rory Gallagher. Though Trower has the edge on most of his contemporaries, depending more on virtuoso skills than sheer volume.

Vince Lovegrove

PLAYER ONE
Game Over
(WEA)

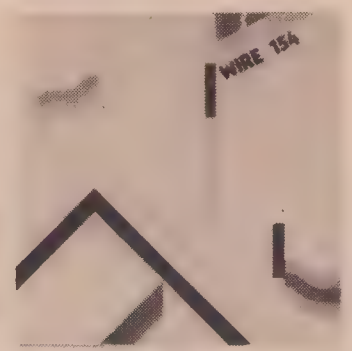
When two excellent producers/musicians, Russel Dunlop and Bruce Brown, aided heavily by studio techniques and synthetic electronic devices, rather hastily put together *Game Over - Player One,* they still managed to maintain a high degree of musical finesse.

Basically, the album is an analogy between the *game* Space Invaders and real life, which is a commercial and social activity of game playing anyhow. *We're All Players "playing nice little games."*

The lyrics are clever without being too ridiculous and the music is diversified, even surprising in places, viz; the appearance of virtuoso slide guitarist Kirk L'Orange on what could easily have been a cheap, plastic cash-in product. Many groups have tried riding trends in the past, and have fallen flat on the face of tasteless frippery, but the production quality through this album is exceptional.

If you enjoy playing the game, you'll be just as amused playing the record.

Jay Moxham

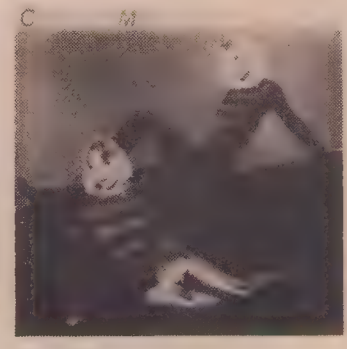


WIRE
WIRE 154
(EMI)

As their Miro-like cover (wiggly lines, geometric shapes and lots of spaces) suggests, Wire are not interested in presenting a whole filled-in picture with a foreground, background and mid-ground. But their music is not skeletal - the vocals in *154* are rich, the synthesiser smooth and flowing, the guitars energetic and melodic. Wire experiment with the structure and shape of songs, and sound at times like a topsy turvy Pink Floyd. They lead the listener to a precipice and then stop, as in *Two People In A Room,* the album's second track: Bashing energetic drums jump into the beat, joined by racing guitars and powerful bass; the vocals begin in an evil close up whisper, alternating with a voice that works up to a screaming climax, and at the soaring peak, the music comes to an abrupt halt. They stop just as you think they are going to start, they start just as you think they are going to stop.

Wire's songs are filled with so many ideas that at times they're just amorphous masses as in *A Touching Display.* They are clever, and just a trifle cynical as in *The Other Window,* and sometimes very pretentious. (The lyrics of the opening track *I Should Have Known Better* are enough to make the most hardened intellectual wince), but their more excessive moments are balanced by the ingenuity in their music.

Miranda Brown



CHERIE AND MARIE CURRIE
Messin' With The Boys
(Capitol)

Whether serious or tongue-in-cheek, the dedication stamped on the reverse of this post-Runaways elpee is appropriate for the musical contents.

The dedication reads: *"This album is dedicated to our dad,*

The Royal Charity Performance

Sydney Opera House, Tuesday 27th May, 1980

Peter Allen

I COULD HAVE BEEN A SAILOR
36767

TENTERFIELD SADDLER
36493

IT IS TIME FOR PETER ALLEN
A LIVE 2 Record Set 45763/4

TAUGHT BY EXPERTS
Features "I Go To Rio"
35873

CONTINENTAL AMERICAN
35410

ALSO AVAILABLE

I STILL CALL AUSTRALIA HOME

K7843

A&M RECORDS

ON RECORD AND TAPE

THRU festival

Leona." There is no doubt that grandma Leona would have just Loooved this little piece of post sixties-styled Lesley Gore. Only Lesley had at least a little expression in her voice.

Ch...Ch...Ch... Cherie and her sister Marie d... d... d... d...drone their way thru eleven cover versions, so weak and insipid, this reviewer could only wince with every note. They smooth-silk through songs like Eric Carmen's *Overnight Sensation.* They also attempt to mince their way through a regurg-rock version of the classic *Wishing Well.* Of the latter, Paul Kossoff should turn in his grave.

Musical backing on the album is provided, in the main, by streamlined musical chamelions, Toto, so every note is clinically correct.

Nice attempt girls, but you need to get closer to your roots!

Vince Lovegrove

THE TOURISTS
Reality Effect
(Logo)

Well, Mama and Papa, if you're thirty five and refuse to forget the sweet sounds of your youth, the bop-pop San Francisco soft harmonies of The Tourists should quench your thirst to wear a flower in your hair once again.

The cover design and album title suggest some hope of a realistic approach to the times, but the group stands totally unaffected (except for paint splatters) by the previous decade or so. A slightly updated version of the hit *I Only Want To Be With You* is an excellent indication of the album's character. The Tourists were perhaps distraught at the aggressiveness of The New Wave and decided that it was time to remind us of our gentler roots.

The songs have a solid rhythm section and crashing guitars, which I guess makes it dance music (sometimes brinking on Cheap Trick or Blondie) but the melodies and riffs are unmistakably old hat.

So, if you wish to do some time travelling back into the past and not let *reality effect* you, then see your local *tourist agent.*

Jay Moxham

JAPAN
Quiet Life
(RCA-Victor)

Probably best known in Australia for their '79 single, *Life In Tokyo* (produced by Giorgio Moroder) which received solid airplay on alternative radio stations, this is Japan's third album. *Quiet Life* produced by John Punter at Air Studios flirts in its songs with exotic times and places. David Sylvain, the band's lead singer and undisputed leader, wroter all the album material except Lou Reed's *All Tomorrow's Parties*, a melodic, quietly negative song which leads from a toe tapping rhythm into Sylvains elegant whining vocals. The remaining tracks such as *Despair, Alien* and *The Other* paint dark, garish visions onto unfortunately empty tunes; the synthesiser which features in the majority, floats without getting anywhere and the tunes are instantly forgettable. Sylvain's voice is at times uncannily like Bryan Ferry's - add synthesiser, saxophone and you get the general Japan picture... prettier, poppier and far less exciting Roxy clones.

Sylvain dresses himself on the front cover as a glam transvestite and the open out cover has the band's faces close up. Japan attempt to be glamorously weird, but their music doesn't stand up to the image.

Miranda Brown

WILLIE NELSON
Stardust
The Electric Horseman
(CBS)

For the last few years Willie Nelson has spearheaded the outlaw movement in country music in America; a movement that appeals to both redneck and hip music fans; a movement that represents the break away country music scene where college educated folk and blues singers use the vehicle of traditional country to express more intense and personal feelings. And his acceptance in contemporary music circles has elevated him to a new position in his career where I guess, it is hip to get the guy to feature in a movie, get him to write some of the tunes, and play second fiddle to a couple of real Hollywood Stars like Redford and Fonda.

Stardust would appear to be a re-release from late 1978 and it is an album *not* representative, mostly, of the true music of Willie Nelson. He does versions of some great old tunes, *Stardust* and *Georgia On My Mind* from Hoagy Carmichael, George and Ira Gershwins' *Someone To Watch Over Me*, Irving Berlin's *Blue Skies.* Basically all American folk music, but from a different era. And it is all handled with a minimum of fuss, very laid-back and quite charming in a somewhat self-indulgent esoteric way. If you want to pick up on some nice treatments of some famous old songs from way back when popular music was a new-born phenomena, you could do a lot worse.

But it is back in the shops to cash in on the interest created by the biggie. *The Electric Horseman* is a high budget movie with a couple of huge stars and some good music. As is the case with albums of this nature the sides are split into song content on one side and the true soundtrack stuff padding out the other side.

Side one contains tracks performed by Nelson and his band and includes Gregg Allman's *Midnight Rider*, the country hit, *Mammas, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up To Be Cowboys* and several other odes to romance and spirit of freedom.

Side two is all the work of Dave Grusin, whizz kid composer and producer of things disco.

Except for the plaintive *Rising Star (Love Theme)* with its romantic boots and saddles flavour of true love on the range, but mostly it comes off sounding like background music from *Charlie's Angels.* The ho-hum cliche disco track *Disco Magic* is truly boring on record but in the context of the film, where Redford rides off the stage through the Vegas tits and bum dancers, it's a fine backtrack but hardly warrants five minutes on an album. Ah, they don't make 'em like *South Pacific* anymore.

Doug Tartan

MICHAEL FRANKS
One Bad Habit
(WEA)

Another set of perfectly crafted and executed Cool School jazz funk from the soft voiced master of the genre. He hasn't changed appreciably since the days of *Popsicle Toes* though there is nothing as whimsical as that on this set. In fact, he is sounding more and more like his obvious mainstream jazz influence Blossom Dearie than ever, especially on the smooth, sparse and sad ballad *Still Life.* This is a neat lyrical change from the standard love song material that features through most of the rest of the album, though Franks is thankfully as cloyingly romantic yet naive of sugary sweet as most jazz/funk singer/songwriter/bands tend to be. He can come up with some trite analogies, like comparing love to baseball in the opener-*Baseball*, but will defuse that triteness in the verses with a few neat twists using the game's terminology as with *"Here I am behind the ninth/The count's 3 and 2/End the game like Beethoven's/ NINTH".* It's a game with puns jazzers seem incapable of avoiding but saves it from sleepy romantic excess here.

The instrumentation and arrangement bring in elements not usually used in the strict jazz/funk field like Spanish guitar in *Inside You*, counter pointing the piano and standard strings of the ballad. It's all very subtle, laid-back stuff, not an ounce of energy or frenetics; it's the sort of album that appeals to the musician, the thinking listener who has grown too lazy to sweat over their music. Or perhaps it's background mood music - great for seductions! A nice listening album for post-raging early hours and the occasionaly lyrical witticism may catch even the most jaded punter.

Michael Smith

THE STARJETS
God Bless Starjets
(CBS)

The Starjets are a hot little Belfast band who dish out fast raging rock and roll and sing with surprisingly sweet voices. They write songs filled with hookliness and interesting time changes, combining the sweet-sweet sound of the '60s with the raw aggression of the late '70s.

Despite the sugar coated vocal sound, the lyrics are far from sweet. The Starjets write with contemporary realism rather than the naive romanticism of sixties pop. Their youthful overview of the world is defiant, agressive and incisive, their command of the language sophisticated.

Unfortunately, their musical sense is less well developed. On two of the album tracks, the Starjets opted for a purer sixties style. *I'm So Glad* toys with a Latin American feel and vocal construction employed by sixties bands like The Drifters. In this romantic setting, the down to earth lyrics just don't mesh, nor does the raw guitar solo with which the song ends. *Run With The Pack* fetures Beach Boys-style vocals and the sounds of a motorbike roaring off. Both of these tracks detract from the otherwise honest, forthright attack of the music.

Side two's opener, *Smart Boys*, begins with the line *"Starjets are Smart Boys"*. But it requires a good deal of wading to discover the band's energy obscured beneath the shoddy production. The songs are full of promised, but undelivered possibilities.

A selection of people swap the production work and none of them does a very good job. *God Bless Starjets* appears to be a hastily put together album - even the song titles are listed in the wrong order on the album cover. It's a shame. With a bit more time and care, this album *could* have been first rate.

Miranda Brown

POCO
The Very Best Of Poco
(CBS)

Poco set the standards for high calibre, high harmony and high energy country rock and roll. These standards were embellished by such west coast bands as the Eagles who rose to prominence in this country on the foundations set by. Poco's consummation of the marriage between country-and-western and rock-and-roll. And Poco never achieved the recognition they deserved. The band over the years became a training ground for some of America's finest exponents of what was to become the 'LA sound'. Richie Furay, Jim Messina, Rusty Young and Tim Schmitt (who has completed the circle somewhat by replacing Randy Meisner in the Eagles). This album spans several years, several line-up changes and includes highlights from all their previous albums including their only commercial hit *A Good Feeling To Know.*

A good album to have in the collection if only to use for reference for some fine vocal and instrumental performances. But all in all it feels a bit like an obituary; let's remember all the good bits and forget the bummers. I am sure everyone connected with the band is doing fine where they are right now, and maybe we should listen to their new stuff rather than remember the good old days.

Doug Tartan

RUSS BALLARD
Russ Ballard And The Barnet Dogs
(Epic)

Russ Ballard's skills are a mixed bag. The Englishman was a member of Adam Faith's Roulettes in the mid-'60s, but his multiple talents were better employed in the successful '70s rockers, Argent, in which Ballard was singer, guitarist and songwriter. After notching up a brace of world-wide hits with *Hold Your Head In* and *God Gave Rock And Roll To You*, Ballard quit the band to pursue a solo career. Since then, he's recorded three solo albums, written songs for everyone from Hot Chocolate to Olivia Newton-John (including Three Dog Night's million selling US hit, *Liar*), done mucho session work, and handled production duties for Roger Daltrey's solo album and Leo Sayer's *Moonlighting* album.

His previous solo album, *The Stroke*, fetured playing from top LA musicians, including several members of Toto. Perhaps to create a greater sense of identity, Russell recorded this album in England with a band, The Barnet Dogs assembled around him. Unfortunately, that bane of session musicians, *facelessness*, is hard disease to shake. The opening track sounds like Led Zeppelin, and the second like The Knack. And so it goes. There's some straight rock tracks, some classic pop songs, some throwaways and a *couple* of numbers with an interesting modern twist to them.

The lyrics are characterless. Mostly, the songs deal with cliched accounts of love relationships, although Ballard's hitmaking talents in the melodic dept was very evident. The eight originals on this nine track album are well endowed with seductive hooks

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and cleverly arranged.

The production, shared by Ballard and John Stanley, strives towards a modern sound. As with Mike Chapman's production of The Knack's first album, the songs sound clean and uncluttered. Between the beat-beat of the drums and the melodic vocals, the guitars play subtle, murmuring rhythms. Russell veers between more conventional fluid guitar lines and rhythmic chordal playing - the most interesting moments on the album are when he and guitarist Bill Roberts play metallic duets with the rhythms.

Russ Ballard And The Barnet Dogs suffers from a mish-mash of ideas, but offers some arresting moments for the listener. Approached as a band's debut, it is a promising album.

Miranda Brown

singles

Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons - All I Wanna Do (Mushroom): *'Play this record three times'* says the label and believe me, if you do, you can't get this damn song out of your head for hours. It's great. Good lyrics, a fine vocal performance from the little fella, and the band is having a ball. Put that with another infectuous piano and guitar riff and you have all the ingredients for another hit for the band. What else can I say? I love it.

Cold Chisel - Cheap Wine (WEA): Cold Chisel have always approached the seamier side of life with a lusty bravado that has tended to soften Don Walker's somewhat cynical lyrics about booze drugs and other day to day occurrences that make his songs a *tour de force* of good-time steaming rock and roll. Another excellent song from Mr Walker, a stunning vocal performance from Jimmie Barnes, the band cooks and the production is good. This track may not please some of the die-hard head-bashers but will certainly broaden their appeal via the airwaves.

Chris Pelcer - You Can Be My Slave (WEA): Chris Pelcer is a Sydney songwriter of some note who managed to find himself in the position of making his own album, and this little piece of nonsense is the first single from that album. It has a certain catchiness, as does yawning, but, my God, the lyrics! "Blatant sexism" doesn't quite come strong enough to describe them. If it's tongue-in-cheek, the wit hasn't come through. I wish you luck with your career as well as your love life, sir.

Split Enz - I Hope I Never (Mushroom): A special limited edition three-track single gives Tim Finn a chance to compete with his brother for airtime with this re-mixed version of the grandiose and beautiful song *I Hope I Never* from the album *True Colours*. The flip side gives two previously unreleased tracks as a bonus, but the remix of the A side is worth it alone.

Jimmy & The Boys - Products Of Your Mind (Avenue): After all they've done to us, now they turn around and try to blame it all on *us!* They say they are merely products of our minds. Ha! Jimmy and Joylene with some new little boys, making products from our minds and selling it right back to us. A large slice of electro-disco bondage rock, whatever that is, and hugely entertaining. Oh yes, it's on puce coloured vinyl.

Skyhooks - Keep The Junk In America (Mushroom): A seemingly pointless request for someone to keep all sorts of junk, whether it be space junk, junk food, or junk junk (and we're all supposed to know about that type of junk) where it belongs in America, wrapped up in a turgid reggae feel. It makes one hope this is NOT destined for American release. In fact, one wonders why it was released here.

The Hounds - Little Darling (Slater Sound): Ho Hum. Apparently the Hounds are from Adelaide and are moving to Sydney, and this is their first single on yet another independent label and that's about it. It all sounds like a fledgling Cold Chisel with Barnes-like voice and a muddy band. Still, Chisel finally made it, so take heart lads.

James Freud And The Radio Stars - Modern Girl (Mushroom): Another Melbourne new wave band with something to say. And it sounds like art-school rock to me. Nevertheless, well played, well sung.

Sekret Sekret - Charity/Hope You Can (Happy Town): I suppose it all means something to someone but it really escapes me. The vocals are unintelligible, the playing lame. I thought you had to be tough to be new-wave. But this is awful.

Tactics - Outdoors (Doublethink): Perhaps a good record. I never got the chance to hear it due to the quality of the pressing. Gentlemen, one can only admire the emergence of small independent labels giving an opportunity to lesser-heard bands to crack the markets. But you won't gain a lot of friends if the shop copies of your records are in as deplorable condition as this copy. Warping and faults in the pressing made it impossible to listen to. Sorry lads, but there is a place for quality control.

Pulp Baby - The Systematics (Doublethink): I can imagine this driving some poor refuddled acid casualty to vitamin B and a wholemeal existence if he stumbled across this on the radio at four o'clock in the morning. Toneless double-speak voice over horrible synthesizer lines that sounds like a tape-loop demo for Moog.

Magnum Bonum - Lover Boy (Big Mouth): I think Magnum Bonum is a real person and not Boney M gone arty or heavy. It smacks of the Swedish pop machine and conjures up images of some lithe young man singing English lyrics phonetically with no idea what they mean. Probably just as well. This is dreadful.

The Boys — You'd Better Move On (Safari): A grim reworking of a fine old song. The Stones gave it a sparkle, a white r&b touch of pathos, of anger of jealousy, and these boys give it hell. Churning wall-of-sound guitars, a wafer thin vocal and, of all things, lotsa whistling. Betcha never had a hook whistled at you before.

Doug Tartan

boox

JAZZ: A PHOTO HISTORY

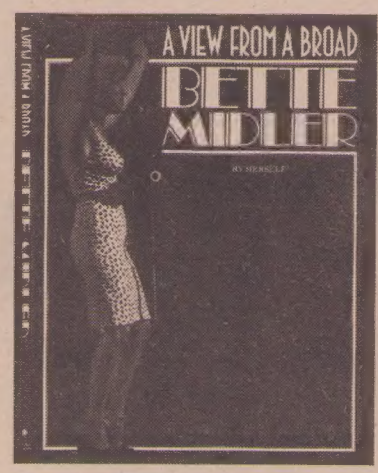
By: Joachim-Ernst Berendt
Published by: Hutchinson Group.

Jazz: A Photo History starts with the admonition that *'Jazz is visual music'* then goes on to demonstrate its visual magnificence for 340 or so pages. There are 370 photos in *Jazz* and not one is a filler. From a young Louis Armstrong, to New Orleans' kids dancing in the streets, to Jimi Hendrix soaring on guitar, to Gene Krupa clenching his teeth through a drum solo, to Count Basie looking ridiculously elegant, even when slouched over, a cigarette drooping from the side of his lips, to Charlie 'Bird' Parker looking as happy and sociable as his life was really isolated and tormented.

Beautiful pictures. The sort of pictures that take you from the origins of jazz to the present age of fusion with McLaughlin et al, so you can actually trace the family tree resemblance.

The words are concise, factual, and ringing with the feeling of authentic love and intrinsic love of the subject. *Jazz: A Photo History* is all-round one of those rare books that both educate and exhilarate. By the end you realise the falsity of setting up boundaries within music, that the revolutions within rock about which we've waxed so fervently over the past few years have happened many, many times before, in jazz. And that modern rock innovators like Elvis Costello, Jerry Dammers or John Lydon has astonishing similarities to say Coltrane, Bird, or a young Archie Shepp. Not that Lydon is mentioned in *Jazz: A Photo History*, but it's the sort of book that makes you think that, if there's a follow-up edition within a few years, he will. Because *Jazz: A Photo History* makes you realise that beyond form, technique, training and style there is a living intangible called music, whose spirit is ever ongoing and unquenchable. Hell, it might even inspire you to search for recordings of some of the artists mentioned. And that's not meant at all patronisingly. In fact, if someone could just guide me now to the collected recordings of Bird, or the early works of Miles Davis...

Anthony O'Grady



A VIEW FROM A BROAD

By: Bette Midler
Published By: Angus & Robertson
($14.95)

Here it is - for those of you who could never get your hands on enough of Bette! An account (vaguely factual) of her first world tour, as funny, risque and poignant as her shows, and almost as lavishly mounted. She's a great singer, but what makes her the First Lady of Entertainment is her bawdy and highly literate wit, and here 150-odd pages of it, uninterrupted by music. Mind you, there is some material lifted directly from the stage act: some of the best of the Sophie Tucker routines, and introductory raves perportedly from the opening show in various countries. An excerpt from the Australian section: "... But let's face it, kids - once you're out of Sydney, every town is Perth. Let's talk about Perth for a minute. Actually, a minute is about as long as you can talk about Perth... and Melbourne is the kind of town that really makes you consider the question 'Is there life before death?'..."

Apart from the tour, there are insights on growing up in Hawaii, a running joke on the media's obsession with her early days at the Continental baths, a note on *The Rose* - "there were some initial difficulties when the director first told me the disappointing news that if the film was to have any semblance of reality at all there would have to be moments when other people were on-screen at the same time I was", and the occasional serious reflection about devoted fans, and being an American visitor in post-Vietnam South East Asia. She demonstrates her most *searching* method of auditions, and the band application form includes such pertinent questions as: "Do you take drugs...? Can you arrange for your own supply...? Can you arrange for mine?..." and "Have you been able to read this application by yourself? Yes... No... Sort of..."

A View From A Broad is sleekly designed, with lots of crazy pictures, and a text that could reassure Dorothy Parker and S.J. Perelman that the torch they raised in American humour is still carried high. Lots of fun.

Greg Taylor

R.I.P. JEAN PAUL SARTRE (1905-1980)

"They thought him sacred and embalmed. He dies, and they discover how much he remains alive. Embarrassment and resentment appear through the funeral wreaths which they grudgingly braid for him, to show that he displeases and will continue to displease for a long time to some."
Sartre: *Gide Vivant* **(1951)**

Jean-Paul Sartre, who died in Paris last fortnight at the age of 75 and was buried in the city's illustrious Pere Lachaise cemetery over the weekend, was both a good man and, according to his lights, a brave one as well. Which renders the obsequies written since his death all the more unsavoury.

Continuing his dissertation on the novelist Andre Gide's demise three decades ago, which heads this column, Sartre goes on to voice his infuriation at *"The mental reservations, the hypocrisy, and... the revolting stench of the obituaries devoted to him."* The author of these words would surely have expressed similar disgust at the complexion of his own late notices, were he still around to read them, although I doubt whether they would have surprised this lifelong rebel much.

One of the founders of modern French existentialist thought *pace* Kierkegaard, Jean-Paul Sartre is hailed during his lifetime among the foremost philosophers of his age; the later Beat movement distilling a consideration of Sartre's more romantic ideologies within its own doctrine, as discussed in Norman Mailer's pamphlet *The White Negro.*

Much of Sartre's eminence in

this field is sustained in the pages of his lengthy and somewhat abtruse tome *L'Etre Et Le Neant,* which makes a concerted offensive on orthodox philosophical perspectives regarding the human mind vis-a-vis the external world, essaying standard Sartrian concepts of freedom, alienation and bad faith, as well as the "being" and "nothingness" precepts of its title.

More even than his philosophical discourses, however, Jean-Paul Sartre's main claim to fame rests on his literary achievements; his plays, essays, short stories, and novels.

Like that other colossus of twentieth century French literature, Albert Camus, with whom Jean-Paul quarrelled during his lifetime, Sartre's fictional output was relatively slim; and as with Camus, too, Sartre had already dispensed with the novel form a long time before his death, focussing his literary proclivities instead in the writing and editing of the review *Les Temps Modernes.*

In all, Sartre wrote just four novels: *La Nausee* (Nausea), and the *Les Chemins De La Liberte* (Roads To Freedom) trilogy.

La Nausee (1938), his first novel is still probably his most discussed work. Written in diary form, it relates a metaphysical crisis in the life of one Antoine Roquentin, a citizen of Bouville (Marseilles). The dominant feature of this malaise is Roquentin's gradual realisation of the contingency of external, everyday objects, which begin to take on an unreal, or too real aspect, and overwhelm him with disgust.

"Things are bad! Things are very bad: I've got it, that filthy thing, the Nausea. And this time it's new: it caught me in a cafe. Until now cafes were my only refuge because they are full of people and well lighted: from now on I shan't have even that; when I am run to earth in my room, I shall no longer know where to go."

The novel goes on to describe Roquentin's inner turmoil in vivid language, and his eventual salvation through, of all things, a piece of blues music. He reflects on the achievement of the song's composer and its chanteur.

"She sings. That makes two people who are saved: the Jew and the Negress. Saved. Perhaps they thought they were lost right until the very end, drowned in existence..."

He decides to create something of his own. "A book. A novel. And there would be people who would read this novel... and they would think about my life as I think about the life of that Negress: as about something precious and almost legendary."

La Nausee is a difficult novel to penetrate; in fact, many a reader abandons it unfinished, repulsed by its contents with a distaste befitting Roquentin himself.

The trilogy collectively inscribed *Les Chemins De La Liberte* represents a much more satisfactory endeavour, in particular the first title *L'Age De Raison* (The Age Of Reason). The books trace the careers of a central character Mathieu Delarue and his circle of friends in Paris before the Second World War; at the time of the Munich Crisis *(Le Sursis* or *The Reprieve)* and during the war itself *(La Mort Dans l'Ame* or *Iron In The Soul).* A gallery of caricatured personalities flit across the pages of the three books, including Delarue's mistress Marcelle, the homosexual Daniel; Brunet, stalwart of the Communist Party; the painter Gomez, a general in the Spanish Republican Army; and others. Once more, we examine Sartre's dialectics of freedom, bad faith and commitment, as well as the Marxian preoccupations which increasingly pervade the writer's later works.

Jean-Paul Sartre's later years were clouded by disenchantment and thwarted political outbursts. He spurned a Legion of Honour, rejected a Nobel Prize, and devoted his last energies to political freedom and the oppressed peoples of the world. The vulture obituarists pick at his bones, comparing his politics to the tantrums of a wilful child, accuse him of sexual obsession, and compare him adversely with Bertrand Russell in his dotage.

Perhaps the best epitaph of Sartre is that written by Jean-Paul himself describing the Venetian painter Tintoretto: *"(he) waged a losing battle against a numberless adversary, grew weary, and died, defeated. And that is the essence of his life."*

The Citizen

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tours

Street Level
May
30 Maroubra Bay Hotel
31 Tropicana, Wilberforce
June
5 Penshurst Hotel

The Voices
May
30 Ashfield Hotel
31 Forest Inn, Bexley
June
2 Civic Hotel
8 Brighton Hotel (arvo)
9 Civic Hotel
12 Paddington Green

Toy Love
May
30 Civic Hotel
31 Old Marist Bros Hall, Darlinghurst
June
1 W'gong Leagues Club

Matt Finish
May
30 Sylvania Hotel
31 Forest Inn, Bexley
June
2 Civic Hotel
4 NSW Uni (lunch)
Manzil Room (evening)
5 Forest Inn, Bexley
6 Caringbah Inn
7 Padstow Park Hotel
8 Bondi Lifesaver
9 Civic Hotel
11 Cronulla-Sutherland Leagues (early)
Manzil Room (late)
13 Macquarie Uni (early)
Vicar of Wakefield (late)

Hitmen
May
30 Royal Antler Narrabeen
31 Bexley Nth Hotel
June
1 W'gong Leagues Club
2-8 Melbourne
9 Sefton Hotel
11 Comb & Cutter

The Numbers
June
4 Wollongong Leagues
5 Sylvania Hotel
6 Mittagong RSL
7 Metropole Tavern
8 Swansea Workers

Stockley, See & Mason
May
30 Caringbah Inn
31 Governors Pleasure

The Dugites
May
31 Caringbah Inn
31 Metropole Tavern
June
3 Civic Hotel
5 Sylvania Hotel
6 Governors Pleasure
13 Paddington Green

In X-S
May
31 Royal Antler Narrabeen
June
2 Strata Motor Inn
3 Paddington Green
4 W'gong Leagues
5 Sylvania Hotel
6 Metropole Tavern
7 Manly Vale Hotel
10 Paddington Green
11 Comb & Cutter Hotel
12 Caringbah Inn
13 Metropole Tavern

Mental As Anything
May
30 Bondi Lifesaver
31 Vicar of Wakefield

Cold Chisel
June
2 Bexley North Hotel
3 Family Inn Hotel
6 Selinas
7 Manly Vale Hotel
8 Wollongong Leagues
9 Captain Cook Hotel Can.
11 Waurn Ponds Hotel, Geelong
12 Village Green, Melb
13 Bombay Rock

Loaded Dice
May
30 Caringbah Inn
31 Ainslie Rex, Canberra
June
1 Penrith Leagues
2 Sefton Hotel
4 Enfield Hotel
5 Civic Hotel
6 Royal Antler Narrabeen
7 Maroubra Seals
8 Brighton Hotel (arvo)
12 Civic Hotel
13 Strata Motor Inn

Outline
May
30 Metropole Tavern
31 Selinas
June
1 Port Kembla Leagues
2 Bexley North Hotel
4 Civic Hotel
6 Comb & Cutter
7 Fairfield Hotel
10 Collegians RISC
11 Civic Hotel
12 Forest Inn Bexley

Redgum
May
30 Governors Pleasure
31 Governors Pleasure

The Elks
May
30 Vicar of Wakefield
June
6,7 Maroubra Seals

The Bushwackers
May
31 Stardust Hotel
June
1 St George Leagues

Mi-Sex
May
30 Fairfield Hotel
31 Family Inn Hotel
June
1 Roundhouse NSW Uni
6 Latrobe Uni Melb
7 Bombay Rock

QV's
May
30 Hunters Humpy
31 Hunter River Hotel Maitland
June
5 Astra Hotel
6 Mona Vale Hotel
11 Marlin Hotel, Ulladulla
12 Beakin Inn
13 Captain Cook, Griffith

Terry Foot
May
30 Duke of Edinburgh Hotel Pyrmont
31 Shadows Wine Bar
June
4 Antler Parkway Hotel, Frenchs Forest
5 Summer Hill Hotel
6 Duke of Edinburgh
7 Eastwood Hotel
10 Auburn Hotel
11 Antler Parkway Hotel
12 Summer Hill Hotel
13 Duke of Edinburgh

Wright Bros
May
30 Ramsgate RSL
31 Wentworth Falls Country Club
June
6 Rooty Hill RSL
13 Rooty Hill RSL

Thought Criminals
May
30 Forest Inn Bexley
31 Civic Hotel
June
6 Forest Inn
8 Side F-X, Darlinghurst
12 Heritage Hotel
13 Forest Inn

Tactics
May
30 Forest Inn
June
6 Forest Inn
7 Civic Hotel
8 Side F-X
13 Forest Inn

Sekret Sekret
May
30 Armidale
31 Armidale
June
4 Aust. Heritage Hotel
10 Frenchs

The Singles
May
30 Aust. Heritage Hotel
31 Civic Hotel
June
4 Aust Heritage Hotel

JMM
May
30, 31 Melbourne

Dutch Tilders & Mickey Finn Double Trouble NSW Tour
June
11 Bulli Soccer Club
12 Jolly Frog, Windsor
13 Paddington Town Hall

The Eyes
May
31 Nth Suburbs, W'gong
June
5 Stardust
6 Railway Hotel
7 Strata Motor Inn
12 CAE C'berra (lunch)
Kingston C'berra
13 Wagga

Midnight Oil
June
1-8 Perth
12-15 Adelaide

Shades
June
1 Ainsley Hotel
3 Manzil Room
4 Palais Newcastle
5 Jolly Frog Windsor
6 Maroubra Bay Hotel
7 Bathurst CAE
8 Bondi Lifesaver

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